CONTENTS

CARTOONS

PICTURES

PREFACE

This book is intended to present to the reader an impartial collection of all relevant documents to enable one to study the issues involved in the recent conversations that took place between Mr Jinnah and Mahatma Gandhi. Nothing has been omitted from any desire to prevent a just conclusion being reached by the reader or to tip the scales in favour of any particular view. Writing a preface, however, one is at liberty to put down one's own view of the matter. Since April 1942, I strove to find a just and acceptable solution which would bring the Muslim League and the Congress together and enable them jointly to assault the Imperialist citadel. I have worked hard without fear or favour. I have tried to understand the case of the Muslims and the case of the Congress and to be just to both parties. This claim may not be accepted either by the Muslim League leader or by the leaders of Hindu communalists. But I believe that impartial judges will see some justice in the claim.

At one time I felt that the Congress failed to see the reasonableness and the restraint of the Muslim claim, and I fought hard and persistently to make the Congress and Mahatma Gandhi perceive what I felt was just in the demand of the League and what I was convinced must be conceded in order to make any progress in the struggle for Indian Independence. When in March 1943, Gandhiji accepted my proposal I thought the battle was over. But then the position was reversed and it was Mr Jinnah whose consent I could not get to the only possible settlement conceivable in terms of the Muslim League demand.

It would seem as if at the end of it, we are exactly where we were. But this is only the apparent position. In reality no sincere and honest effort can be a waste. A just proposal for the recognition of the rights of Muslims in the areas where they are in a majority, a proper appreciation of the difficulties of the problem before us, a discussion by the intelligentsia all over the country and a better understanding of the solution offered is an advance in itself, although the problem may for the time being remain unsettled for any reason beyond our control.

The intention of the League resolution of 1940 is not a mere redistribution of provincial regions for a kind of limited autonomy

under foreign control. The constitution of a truly sovereign State which is what that resolution envisages cannot be achieved unless Britain wholly parts with power over the affairs of India. The fulfilment of the League demand, therefore, cannot precede the attainment of Indian Independence even though the agreement over the issue of separation may be reached and put in complete shape before that day.

Few people realize that the function of a Central Federal Government is not to hear appeals against or rectify the policies of the governments of the units forming the Federation. Certain functions are entirely within the competence of the governments of the Provinces or States whatever they may be called, and certain other functions fall within the jurisdiction of the Federal Centre. There is no question of appeal or Central control. The functions are separate and distinct. So far as the normal life of the people goes, all power is today under Muslim majority control in the whole of Bengal and in the whole of the Punjab and in Sind and the North-West Frontier Province, and will continue to be so whatever may be the nature of the Central Government.

Gandhiji has gone to the farthest limit by way of modifying the national aspiration in order to accommodate the League. From the outset his intention was to reach this limit by a single step and not to enter into any process of bargain or dealing out in parts what he was prepared to concede in the end. It is for all lovers of freedom in India and particularly for the Muslim community to consider whether any alternative can be devised to satisfy the just aspirations of the Muslim League. If this could be done, no one wants partition. But if partition there must be, it cannot be brought about in an arbitrary manner without consulting the wishes of the people, or so as to transfer to Pakistan, districts not peopled by Muslim majorities, against the wishes of those who live in those districts.

In the face of the demand persisted in on behalf of the Muslim League and very weakly resisted by other Muslim elements it is difficult to see how the principle of freedom and self-determination for such areas can be avoided in any plan for a free and independent constitution. Ruling out coercion, as we must, we cannot but resort to some plan by which the ascertained wish of the people in areas where the population is predominantly Muslim must ultimately prevail. The British Government through the Prime Minister declared in Parliament on March 11, 1942, that they had "agreed unitedly upon conclusions for present and future action which,

if accepted by India as a whole, would avoid the alternative danger either that the resistance of a powerful minority might impose an indefinite veto upon the wishes of the majority or that a majority decision might be taken which would be resisted to a point destructive of internal harmony and fatal to the setting up of a new constitution." These conclusions were embodied in the proposals that Sir Stafford Cripps brought to India in 1942, the relevant portions of which are as follows :

> Immediately upon the cessation of hostilities, steps shall be taken to set up in India, in the manner described hereafter, an elected body charged with the task of framing a new constitution for India.
>
> His Majesty's Government undertake to accept and implement forthwith the constitution so framed subject to the right of any Province of British India that is not prepared to accept the new constitution to retain its present constitutional position, provision being made for its subsequent accession if it so desires.
>
> With such non-acceding Provinces, should they so desire, His Majesty's Government will be prepared to agree upon a new constitution, giving them the same full status as the Indian Union, and arrived at by a procedure analogous to that here laid down.

These provisions were further amplified by Sir Stafford Cripps in a letter to the Secretary of the Muslim League, quoted in the League's resolution of April 11, 1942:

> The method of ascertainment proposed in the Cripps Plan is election on a broad franchise and the representatives so elected coming together with the fullest freedom of decision. The question of accession will be put to the vote of each provincial legislature. If the majority voting for accession is less than 60 per cent., the minority will have the right to demand a plebiscite of the adult male population of the province.

Objections were raised on behalf of the Muslim League to this plan both in its resolutions and in statements made by the League President. The objections related to the boundaries of the non-acceding areas as well as to the inclusion of non-Muslims in the plebiscite. But no objection was raised to a plebiscite itself as is done now on the most untenable ground that the Muslim League having demanded it on behalf of the Muslims of India, of whose political organizations it was the most important, the people of the

areas concerned need not be consulted at all on the specific issue of separation and must be presumed to be asking for it. Both in the President's speeches and in resolutions strong objections were raised on behalf of the Muslim League to the delimitation of the areas on the basis of the existing provinces :

> The right of non-accession to the Union as contemplated in the Draft Declaration has been conceded presumably in response to the insistent demand by the Mussalmans for the partition of India, but the method and procedure laid down are such as to negative the professed object, for, the right of non-accession has been given to the existing provinces which have been formed from time to time for administrative convenience and on no logical basis—Muslim League Working Committee's resolution of April 1942, on the Cripps Plan.
>
> Any attempt to solve the problem of India by the process of evading the real issues and by over-emphasising the territorial entity of the provinces which are mere accidents of British policy and administrative divisions is fundamentally wrong.—Mr Jinnah's address at the League session of April, 1942.
>
> As regards the suggested plebiscite in the province in which the Muslims are in a majority the procedure laid down that reference shall be made to the whole adult population of the province and not to the Mussalmans alone is to deny them the inherent right of self-determination.—Muslim League Working Committee's resolution of April 1942, on the Cripps Plan.
>
> The Muslim League therefore calls upon the British Government to come forward without any further delay with an unequivocal declaration guaranteeing to the Mussalmans the right of self-determination and to pledge themselves that they would abide by the verdict of the plebiscite of Mussalmans and give effect to the Pakistan scheme in consonance with the basic principles laid down by the Lahore resolution of the All-India Muslim League passed in 1940.—Muslim League Working Committee's resolution of August 1942.

Immediately after the failure of these negotiations of Sir Stafford Cripps, I set about in consultation with friends who thought in the same direction with me to devise a formula which might secure the largest quantum of acceptance on both sides. This is the scheme of settlement that goes by my name. According to it, those districts in the north-west and east of India wherein the Muslim population

is an absolute majority will be demarcated, and the people inhabiting those areas will decide the issue. These districts are contiguous, and about a dozen districts in the Punjab and more than a dozen districts in Bengal which have no Muslim majorities will leave the integrity of the contiguous Muslim area unimpaired. The single district in Assam, Sylhet, which has a Muslim majority is contiguous to the Muslim area of Bengal and would be joined up with it. The wishes of the people of these two zones in the north-west and east must be ascertained. The minority communities in those areas must be allowed to participate in the plebiscite inasmuch as it would be a most unpromising start for a new State claiming to be constituted for the progress of liberty, to keep large bodies of people away from the ballot box on the score of their religion or on other grounds.

In population, in area and in resources the proposed State if formed according to the terms of the formula will be comparable in size and resources to most free States in the world. It will be over 1,50,000 square miles with splendid river basins and a great port, and will be larger than many a European State of established importance. Its population will be more than 60 millions of whom Muslims will be well over 50 millions. Interested propaganda has however spread want of confidence. Fear seems to have at last seized the protagonists of a separate Muslim State. But this fear instead of leading to a withdrawal of the claim for separate existence and to a search for a settlement in terms of United India, has given rise to preposterous demands for an indefinite extension of territory to include non-Muslim areas, at the same time claiming that the decision should rest only with the Muslim population, thereby heading towards a permanent stalemate. There are indeed few States in the world today, which can be deemed "sufficient" in the language of modern war and modern economy of life. All States are insufficient and dependent in a very large measure today.

I do not think that there is any real difficulty in the way of a courageous acceptance by the Muslims of the responsibilities of a separate State as envisaged in the Lahore resolution and in conformity with the reasonable conditions under which it can be given effect to, namely, those set out in my formula. But if there should be any nervousness or unwillingness to take the grave step of separation there is nothing to prevent the following of a middle course. Alternative plans could be devised, and confederation would be one, whereby sovereign status could be secured without the disadvantages of outright

partition. It is my firm belief that the present opportunity for a settlement should not be lost by the Muslims who cannot live for ever on a mere controversy, but must secure a settlement on reasonable terms.

The demand made in the Lahore resolution has found its proper and well-defined shape and substance in the formula presented to Mr Jinnah. The Muslim community as well as all others interested in the freedom and peaceful progress of India should study it and the documents brought together in this book.

Sevagram, C. RAJAGOPALACHARI.
October 5, 1944.

CORRESPONDENCE

SILENCE PLEASE

Mahatma Gandhi and Mr Jinnah are meeting today.

—*Hindustan Times*, 9-9-'44.

CORRESPONDENCE

Fourteen interviews took place between Mahatma Gandhi and Mr M. A. Jinnah at Bombay, the first on September 9 and the last on September 27, 1944. August 19 was the date originally fixed for the meeting, which had to be postponed owing to Mr Jinnah's illness. Simultaneously with the conversations, which were described as extremely cordial and friendly, they also exchanged letters. The following is the text of the correspondence, which was released to the Press on the 27th:

MR JINNAH TO GANDHIJI

September 10, 1944.

DEAR MR GANDHI,

With reference to our talk yesterday (September 9), I understood from you that you had come to discuss the Hindu-Muslim settlement with me in your individual capacity, and not in any representative character or capacity, on behalf of the Hindus or the Congress; nor had you any authority to do so. I naturally pointed out to you that there must be some one on the other side with authority holding a representative status with whom I can negotiate and, if possible, come to a settlement of the Hindu-Muslim question, and that for the position you had adopted there was no precedent, and that this raises great difficulties in my way.

As you know, I can only speak on behalf of Muslim India and the All-India Muslim League, as the President of the organization which I represent, and as such I am subject to and governed by its constitution, rules and regulations. I think you realize and will admit that a settlement of the Hindu-Muslim question is the foremost and major hurdle, and unless the representatives of these two nations put their heads together, how is one to make any headway with it?

Nevertheless, I explained to you the Lahore resolution of March, 1940, and tried to persuade you to accept the basic and fundamental principles embodied in it, but you not only refused to consider it but emphasized your opposition to the basis indicated in that resolution, and remarked that there was "an ocean between you and me," and when I asked you what is then the alternative you suggest, you put forward a formula of Mr Rajagopalachari approved by you. We discussed it, and as various matters were

vague and nebulous, and some required clarification, I wanted to have a clear idea of what it really meant and what were its implications, and asked you for explanations and clarification regarding the proposals embodied in that formula.

After some discussion, you requested me to formulate in writing my points that I thought required or called for explanation and clarification, and to communicate with you and that you would reply in writing before our next meeting on Monday, September 11, at 5-30 p.m. I am, therefore, submitting to you the following points which require clarification:

(1) With regard to the preamble: In what capacity will you be a consenting party if any agreement is reached between you and me?

(2) Clause 1: With regard to "the constitution for a free India" referred to in this clause, I would like to know first, what constitution do you refer to, who will frame it and when will it come into being?

Next, it is stated in the formula that "the Muslim League endorses the Indian demand for Independence." Does it mean the Congress demand for Independence as formulated in the August resolution of 1942 by the All-India Congress Committee in Bombay or, if not, what is the significance of this term, for you know the Muslim League has made it clear not only by its resolutions but by its creed, which is embodied in its constitution, that we stand for freedom and independence of the whole of this sub-continent, and that applies to Pakistan and Hindustan.

Next it is stated that the Muslim League "will co-operate with the Congress in the formation of a provisional interim government for the transitional period." I would like to know the basis or the lines on which such a government is to be set up or constituted. If you have a complete and definite scheme please let me have it.

(3) Clause 2: Who will appoint the commission referred to in this clause and who will give effect to their findings? What is the meaning of "absolute majority" referred to in it? Will the contemplated plebiscite be taken districtwise or, if not, on what basis? Who will determine and decide whether such a plebiscite should be based on adult franchise or other practicable franchise? Who will give effect to the decision or verdict of the above-mentioned plebiscite? Would only the districts on the border, which are taken out from the boundaries of the present provinces by delimitation, be entitled to choose to join either

State, or would also those outside the present boundaries have the right to choose to join either State?

(4) Clause 3: Who are meant by "all parties" in this clause?

(5) Clause 4: I would like to know between whom and through what machinery and agency will the "mutual agreements" referred to in this clause be entered into? What is meant by "safeguarding defence, commerce and communications and for other essential purposes"? Safeguarding against whom?

(6) Clause 6: "These terms shall be binding only in case of transfer by Britain of full power and responsibility for the governance of India." I would like to know to whom is this power to be transferred, through what machinery and agency, and when?

These are some of the important points that occur to me for the moment, which require explanation and clarification, and I hope that you will let me have full details about the various points that I have raised, in order that I may be better able to understand and judge your proposals before I can deal with them satisfactorily.

Yours sincerely,
M. A. JINNAH.

II

GANDHIJI TO MR JINNAH

September 11, 1944.

DEAR QAID-I-AZAM,

I received your letter yesterday at 3-30 p.m. I was in the midst of appointments. I hasten to reply at the earliest opportunity.

I have said in my letter to you, it is implied in the Rajaji formula and I have stated publicly that I have approached you as an individual. My life mission has been Hindu-Muslim unity which I want for its own sake but which is not to be achieved without the foreign ruling Power being ousted. Hence the first condition of the exercise of the right of self-determination is achieving Independence by the joint action of all the parties and groups composing India. If such joint action is unfortunately impossible, then too I must fight with the assistance of such elements as can be brought together.

I am glad, therefore, that you did not break off our talks when I refused to assume or accept representative capacity. Of course, I am pledged to use all the influence I may have with the Congress to ratify my agreement with you. May I remind you that the Rajaji formula was designed in the first instance for your acceptance and submission thereafter to the League?

It is true that I said an ocean separated you and me in outlook.

But that had no reference to the Lahore resolution of the League. The Lahore resolution is indefinite. Rajaji has taken from it the substance and given it a shape.

Now for the points raised by you.

1. I have already answered this in the foregoing.

2. The constitution will be framed by the provisional government contemplated in the formula or an authority specially set up by it after the British power is withdrawn. The Independence contemplated is of the whole of India as it stands. The basis for the formation of the provisional interim government will have to be agreed to between the League and the Congress.

3. The commission will be appointed by the provisional government. 'Absolute majority' means a clear majority over non-Muslim elements as in Sind, Baluchistan or the Frontier Province. The form of plebiscite and the franchise must be a matter for discussion.

4. "All parties" means parties interested.

5. "Mutual agreement" means agreement between contracting parties. "Safeguarding defence, etc." means for me a Central or joint board of control. "Safeguarding" means safeguarding against all who may put the common interests in jeopardy.

6. The power is to be transferred to the nation, that is, to the provisional government. The formula contemplates peaceful transfer by the British Government. So far as I am concerned I would like the transfer to take place as early as possible.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI.

III
MR JINNAH TO GANDHIJI

September 11, 1944.

DEAR MR GANDHI,

I received your letter of September 11 at 5 p.m. today. I note that you have approached me as an individual, and I have already expressed my views about it. Please do not take it that I acquiesce in the position that you have adopted, for which there is no precedent.* Nevertheless, I proceeded to discuss matters with you naturally because I am anxious to convert you to my point of view if possible. I urged on you that the only solution of India's problem is to accept the division of India as Pakistan and Hindustan, as briefly laid down

* In its report of the proceedings of the Muslim League session of July 1944 at Lahore, the "Dawn" in its issue of July 31 said: "On the League Council authorizing Mr Jinnah to carry on negotiations with Mr Gandhi, the Qaid-i-Azam ruled that all the resolutions on the agenda relating to the C.R.-Gandhi formula could not be moved and the movers, accordingly, withdrew the resolutions." Similar reports appeared in other papers.

in the Lahore resolution of March 1940, and proceed to settle the details forthwith. You say the Lahore resolution is indefinite. You never asked me for any clarification or explanation of the terms of the resolution, but you really indicated your emphatic opposition to the very basis and the fundamental principles embodied in it. I would, therefore, like to know in what way or respect the Lahore resolution is indefinite. I cannot agree that Rajaji has taken from it its substance and given it shape. On the contrary, he has not only put it out of shape but mutilated it, as I explained in my speech which I delivered at the meeting of the Council of the All-India Muslim League at Lahore on July 30, 1944.

You say "the first condition of the exercise of the right of self-determination is achieving Independence by the joint action of all the parties and groups composing India. If such joint action is unfortunately impossible then too I must fight with the assistance of such elements as can be brought together." This in my opinion is, as I have repeatedly said, putting the cart before the horse, and is generally opposed to the policy and declarations of the All-India Muslim League, and you are only holding on firmly to the August resolution of 1942. In order to achieve the freedom and independence of the people of India, it is essential, in the first instance, that there should be a Hindu-Muslim settlement.

Of course, I am thankful to you when you say that you are pledged to use all the influence that you have with the Congress to ratify your agreement with me, but that is not enough in my judgment, although it will be a very valuable help to me.

I once more ask you please to let me know what is your conception of the basis for the formation of a provisional interim government. No doubt it will be subject to agreement between the League and the Congress, but I think in fairness you should at least give me some rough idea or lines of your conception, for you must have thought it out by now, and I would like to know what are your proposals or scheme for the formation of a provisional interim government, which can give me some clear picture to understand it.

You have omitted to answer my question as to who will give effect to the findings of the commission, and also it is not clear to me what you mean by absolute majority, when you say it means "a clear majority over non-Muslim elements as in Sind, Baluchistan or the Frontier Province." You have not even replied to my question as to who will decide the form of the plebiscite and the franchise contemplated by the formula.

The answer to the fourth point does not carry any clear idea when you say "all parties" means "parties interested."

You say "'mutual agreement' means 'agreement between contracting parties.'" Who are the contracting parties once a provisional interim government is established of your conception? Who will appoint the Central or joint board of control, which will safeguard defence, etc., and on what principle, through what machinery and agency, and subject to whose control and orders will such a Central or joint board be?

You say "The power is to be transferred to the nation, that is, to the provisional government." That is all the greater reason why I would like to know full details of the provisional government as contemplated by you and of your conception.

Yours sincerely,
M. A. JINNAH.

IV

MR JINNAH TO GANDHIJI

September 13, 1944.

DEAR MR GANDHI,

When you arrived here on the morning of September 12 to resume our talks, you were good enough to inform me that you had not had time to attend to my letter of September 11, which reached you the same day at 10-30 p.m. We met again today without having received your reply, and I am still waiting for it. Please, therefore let me have your reply as soon as possible with regard to the various points mentioned in my letter to you of September 11.

Yours sincerely,
M. A. JINNAH.

V

GANDHIJI TO MR JINNAH

September 14, 1944.

DEAR QAID-I-AZAM,

I have your letter of the 13th instant. I understood from our talks that you were in no hurry for my answer. I was therefore taking the matter in a leisurely fashion, even hoping that as our talks proceeded and as cordiality increased mutual clarification would come of itself and that we would only have to record our final agreement. But I understand and appreciate the other viewpoint. We should take nothing for granted. I should clarify your difficulties in understanding the Rajaji formula and you should do likewise regarding yours, *i.e.*, the Muslim League Lahore resolution of 1940.

With reference to the Lahore resolution, as agreed between us I shall deal with it in a separate letter.

Perhaps at the end of our discussion, we shall discover that Rajaji

not only has not put the Lahore resolution out of shape and mutilated it, but has given it substance and form.

Indeed in view of your dislike of the Rajaji formula, I have, at any rate for the moment, put it out of my mind and I am now concentrating on the Lahore resolution in the hope of finding a ground for mutual agreement.

So much for the first paragraph of your letter.

As to the second, I do hold that unless we oust the third party we shall not be able to live at peace with one another. That does not mean that I may not make an effort to find ways and means of establishing a living peace between us.

You ask for my conception of the basis for a provisional interim government. I would have told you if I had any scheme in mind. I imagine that if we two can agree, it would be for us to consult the other parties. I can say this, that any provisional government to inspire confidence at the present moment must represent all parties. When that moment arrives I shall have been replaced by some authoritative person, though you will have me always at your beck and call when you have converted me, or I you, or by mutual conversion we have become one mind functioning through two bodies.

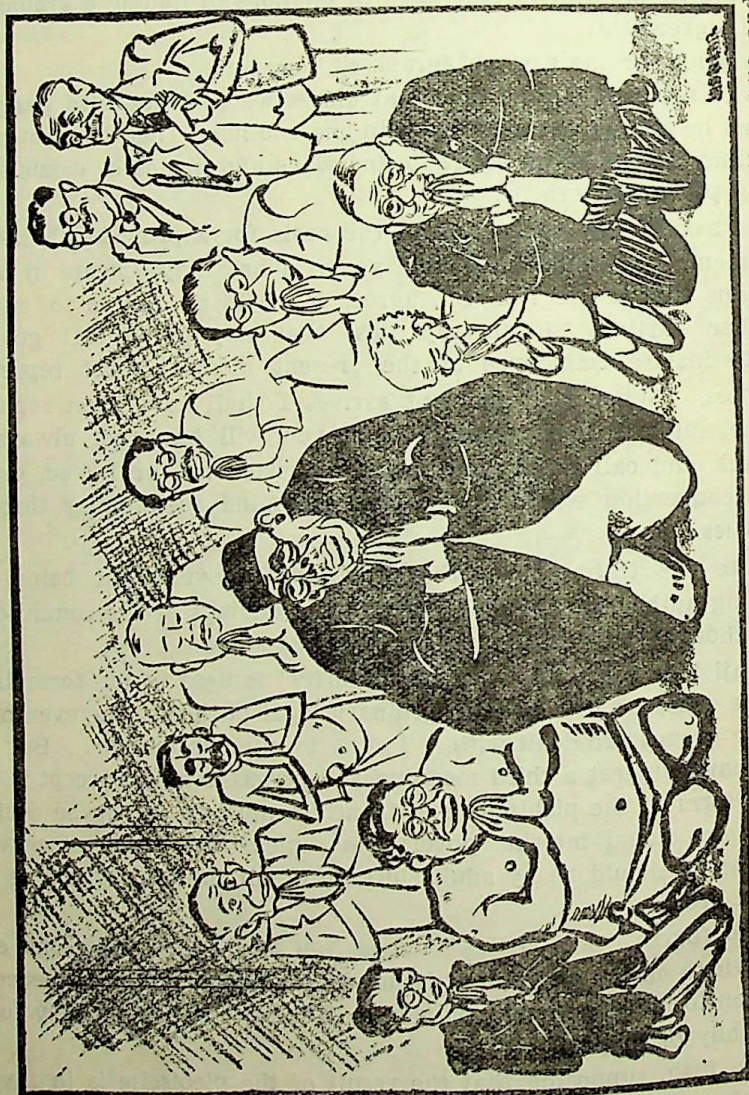
As to the third point, the provisional government being the appointing authority, will give effect to the findings of the commission. This, I thought, was implied in my previous answer.

Rajaji tells me that 'absolute majority' is used in his formula in the same sense as it is used in ordinary legal parlance wherever more than two groups are dealt with. I cling to my own answer. But you will perhaps suggest a third meaning and persuade me to accept it.

The form of the plebiscite and franchise must be left to be decided by the provisional interim government unless we decide it now. I should say it should be by adult suffrage of all the inhabitants of the Pakistan area.

As to fourth, "all parties" means you and I and every one else holding views on the question at issue will, and should, seek by peaceful persuasion to influence public opinion as is done where democracy functions wholly or in part.

As to fifth, supposing that the result of the plebiscite is in favour of partition, the provisional government will draft the treaty and agreements as regards the administration of matters of common interest, but the same has to be confirmed and ratified by the governments of the two States. The machinery required for the settlement and administration of matters of common interest will in the first instance be planned by the interim government, but subsequently will be a matter

SO HELP US GOD

The Metropolitan of India has appealed to the public to offer prayers, both public and private, on the day of the Gandhi-Jinnah meeting. —*Hindustan Times*, 18-8-'44.

The cartoon depicts nominated Members of the Viceroy's Executive Council who would presumably lose their jobs if the Talks succeeded!

for settlement between the two governments acting through the agencies appointed by each for that purpose.

As to sixth, I hope the foregoing makes superfluous any further reply.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI.

VI

MR JINNAH TO GANDHIJI

September 14, 1944.

DEAR MR GANDHI,

I received your letter of September 14, at 4-45 p.m. today in reply to my letter of September 11 (and not of September 13, as you state, which seems to be a mistake), and I thank you for it.

Please let me have, as soon as you can, your promised letter indicating in what way or respect the Lahore resolution is 'indefinite.'

With regard to the provision in the Gandhi-Rajaji formula that "the Muslim League endorses the Indian demand for Independence," I asked you in my letter dated September 10, "Does it mean the Congress demand for Independence as formulated in the August 1942 resolution by the All-India Congress Committee in Bombay or, if not, what is the significance of this term," to this you replied by your letter of September 11, "the Independence contemplated is of the whole of India as it stands." Hence, I again ask, does it mean on the basis of a united India? I find that you have not clarified this point satisfactorily.

As regards the next part of this clause, the formula proceeds to lay down that "the Muslim League will co-operate with the Congress in the formation of the provisional interim government for the transitional period," I requested you by my letter of September 10 to let me know "the basis or the lines by which such a government is to be set up or constituted. If you have a complete and definite scheme, please let me have it," to this you replied by your letter of September 11 under reply, that "the basis for the formation of the provisional interim government will have to be agreed to between the League and the Congress." But that is not meeting my request for clarification or giving me at least the outlines of such a government, and that is what I have been asking for. I hope that you do appreciate my point when I am requesting you to let me have rough outlines of the proposed provisional interim government according to the formula, so that I may have some idea.

Of course, I can quite understand that such a provisional interim government will represent all parties and would be of a character that will inspire confidence at the present moment of all the parties. I can quite understand that when the moment arrives certain things may follow, but before we can deal with this formula in a satisfactory

manner, I repeat again that, as it is your formula, you should give me a rough idea of the provisional interim government that you contemplate and of your conception.

What I would like to know would be, what will be the powers of such a provisional interim government, how it will be formed, to whom it will be responsible, and what its composition will be, etc. You being the sponsor of this Gandhi-Rajaji formula, should give me some rough idea and picture of it, so that I may understand what this part of the formula means.

In your letter of September 14, in reply to my letter of September 11, you inform me that you would have told me if you had any scheme in mind. "I imagine that if we two can agree it would be for us to consult the other parties," but that is just the point. Unless I have some outlines or scheme, however rough, from you, what are we to discuss in order to reach any agreement?

As regards the other matters which you have further explained, I have noted the explanation, and I do not think I need press you further, although some of them are not quite satisfactory.

Yours sincerely,
M. A. JINNAH.

VII

GANDHIJI TO MR JINNAH

September 15, 1944.

DEAR QAID-I-AZAM,

This is in terms of our talk of Wednesday, September 13.

For the moment I have shunted the Rajaji formula and, with your assistance, am applying my mind very seriously to the famous Lahore resolution of the Muslim League.

You must admit that the resolution itself makes no reference to the two nations theory. In the course of our discussions you have passionately pleaded that India contains two nations, *i.e.*, Hindus and Muslims, and that the latter have their homelands in India as the former have theirs.

The more our argument progresses, the more alarming your picture appears to me. It would be alluring if it were true. But my fear is growing that it is wholly unreal. I find no parallel in history for a body of converts and their descendants claiming to be a nation apart from the parent stock. If India was one nation before the advent of Islam, it must remain one in spite of the change of faith of a very large body of her children.

You do not claim to be a separate nation by right of conquest but by reason of acceptance of Islam. Will the two nations become one if the whole of India accepted Islam? Will Bengalis, Oriyas, Andhras,

Tamilians, Maharashtrians, Gujaratis, etc., cease to have their special characteristics if all of them became converts to Islam?

These have all become one politically because they are subject to one foreign control. They are trying today to throw off that subjection.

You seem to have introduced a new test of nationhood. If I accept it, I would have to subscribe to many more claims and face an insoluble problem.

The only real though lawful test of our nationhood arises out of our common political subjection. If you and I throw off this subjection by our combined effort we shall be born a politically free nation out of our travail. If by then we have not learnt to prize our freedom we may quarrel among ourselves and, for want of a common master holding us together in his iron grip, seek to split up into small groups or nationalities. There will be nothing to prevent us from descending to that level and we shall not have to go in search of a master. There are many claimants to the throne that never remains vacant.

With this background I shall present you with my difficulty in accepting your resolution:

(1) Pakistan is not in the resolution. Does it bear the original meaning the Punjab, Afghanistan, Kashmir, Sind and Baluchistan out of which the name was mnemonically formed? If not, what is it?

(2) Is the goal of Pakistan pan-Islam?

(3) What is it that distinguishes an Indian Muslim from every other Indian, if not his religion? Is he different from a Turk or an Arab?

(4) What is the connotation of the word "Muslims" in the resolution under discussion? Does it mean the Muslims of the India of geography or of the Pakistan to be?

(5) Is the resolution addressed to Muslims by way of education, or to the inhabitants of the whole of India by way of appeal or to the foreign ruler as an ultimatum?

(6) Are the constituents in the two zones to constitute "independent States," an undefined number in each zone?

(7) Is the demarcation to take place during the pendency of British rule?

(8) If the answer to the last question is in the affirmative, the proposal must be accepted first by Britain and then imposed upon India, not evolved from within by the free will of the people of India!!!

(9) Have you examined the position and satisfied yourself that these "independent States" will be materially and otherwise benefited by being split up into fragments?

(10) Please satisfy me that these independent sovereign States

will not become a collection of poor States, a menace to themselves and to the rest of India.

(11) Pray show me by facts and figures or otherwise how independence and welfare of India as a whole can be brought about by the acceptance of the resolution?

(12) How are Muslims under the Princes to be disposed of as a result of this scheme?

(13) What is your definition of "minorities"?

(14) Will you please define the "adequate, effective and mandatory safeguards" for minorities referred to in the second part of the resolution?

(15) Do you not see that the Lahore resolution contains only a bare statement of the objective and does not give any idea as to the means to be adopted for the execution of the idea and the concrete corollaries thereof?

For instance:

(a) Are the people in the regions falling under the plan to have any voice in the matter of separation and, if so, how is it to be ascertained?

(b) What is the provision for defence and similar matters of common concern contemplated in the Lahore resolution?

(c) There are many groups of Muslims who have continuously expressed dissent from the policy of the League. While I am prepared to accept the preponderating influence and position of the League and have approached you for that very reason, is it not our joint duty to remove their doubts and carry them with us by making them feel that they and their supporters have not been practically disfranchised?

(d) Does this not lead again to placing the resolution of the League before the people of the zones concerned as a whole for acceptance?

As I write this letter and imagine the working of the resolution in practice, I see nothing but ruin for the whole of India. Believe me, I approach you as a seeker. Though I represent nobody but myself, I aspire to represent all the inhabitants of India. For, I realize in my own person their misery and degradation which is their common lot irrespective of class, caste or creed. I know that you have acquired a unique hold on the Muslim masses, I want you to use your influence for their total welfare, which must include the rest.

In this hastily written letter I have only given an inkling of my difficulty.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI.

VIII
GANDHIJI TO MR JINNAH

September 15, 1944.

DEAR QAID-I-AZAM,

I have yours of September 14, received at 9-40 a.m. I woke up at 3 a.m. today to finish my promised letter on the Lahore resolution. There is no mistake about the date, for I wrote in answer to your reminder of September 13.

Independence does mean as envisaged in the A.-I.C.C. resolution of 1942. But it cannot be on the basis of a united India. If we come to a settlement it would be on the basis of that settlement, assuming of course that it secures general acceptance in the country. The process will be somewhat like this. We reach by joint effort independence for India as it stands. India, become free, will proceed to demarcation, plebiscite and partition if the people concerned vote for partition. All this is implied in the Rajaji formula.

As to the provisional interim government, I am afraid I cannot carry my answer any further than I have done. Though I have no scheme for such a government, if you have one in connection with the Lahore resolution, which also I presume requires an interim government, we can discuss it.

The formula was framed by Rajaji in good faith. I accepted it in equal good faith. The hope was that you would look at it with favour. We still think it to be the best in the circumstances. You and I have to put flesh on it, if we can. I have explained the process we have to go through. You have no objection to it. Perhaps, you want to know how I would form the provisional government if I was invited to form it. If I was in that unenviable position I could see all the claimants and endeavour to satisfy them. My co-operation will be available in that task.

I can give you full satisfaction about your inquiry, "What I would like to know would be: what will be the powers of such a provisional interim Government, how will it be formed, to whom will it be responsible?" The provisional interim government will be responsible to the elected members of the present Assembly or a newly elected one. It will have all the powers less that of the Commander-in-Chief during the war and full powers thereafter. It will be the authority to give effect to the agreement that may be arrived at between the League and the Congress and ratified by the other parties.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI.

IX

MR JINNAH TO GANDHIJI

September 17, 1944.

DEAR MR GANDHI,

I have your letter of September 15, and I thank you for it. I note that you have for the moment shunted "the Rajaji" formula and are applying your mind very seriously to the Lahore resolution of the Muslim League. It is my duty to explain the Lahore resolution to you today and persuade you to accept it, even though you are talking to me, as you have often made it clear, in your individual capacity. I have successfully converted non-Muslim Indians in no small number and also a large body of foreigners, and if I can convert you, exercising as you do tremendous influence over Hindu India, it will be no small assistance to me, although we are not proceeding on the footing that you are carrying on these talks in your representative character, or capacity, and my difficulties remain until you are vested with a representative status and authority in order to negotiate and reach an agreement with you.

You have stated in your letter dated September 11, that the Lahore resolution is "indefinite." I, therefore, naturally asked you please to let me know in what way or respect the Lahore resolution is indefinite. And now I have received your letter of September 15 under reply.

The third paragraph of your letter is not seeking clarification but is a disquisition and expression of your views on the point whether the Mussalmans are a nation. This matter can hardly be discussed by means of correspondence. There is a great deal of discussion and literature on this point which is available, and it is for you to judge finally, when you have studied this question thoroughly, whether the Mussalmans and Hindus are not two major nations in this sub-continent. For the moment I would refer you to two publications, although there are many more,—Dr. Ambedkar's book and "M. R. T.'s" *Nationalism in Conflict in India*. We maintain and hold that Muslims and Hindus are two major nations by any definition or test of a nation. We are a nation of a hundred million, and, what is more, we are a nation with our own distinctive culture and civilization, language and literature, art and architecture, names and nomenclature, sense of value and proportion, legal laws and moral codes, customs and calendar, history and traditions, aptitudes and ambitions—in short, we have our own distinctive outlook on life and of life. By all canons of international law we are a nation. Now I shall reply to your various points:

(1) Yes, the word "Pakistan" is not mentioned in the resolution, and it does not bear the original meaning. The word has now become synonymous with the Lahore resolution.

(2) This point does not arise, but still I reply that the question is a mere bogey.

(3) This point is covered by my answer that the Mussalmans of India are a nation. As to the last part of your query, it is hardly relevant to the matter of clarification of the resolution.

(4) Surely you know what the word "Muslims" means.

(5) This point does not arise by way of clarification of the text of the Lahore resolution.

(6) No. They will form units of Pakistan.

(7) As soon as the basis and the principles embodied in the Lahore resolution are accepted, the question of demarcation will have to be taken up immediately.

(8) In view of my reply to (7), your question (8) has been answered.

(9) Does not relate to clarification.

(10) My answer to (9) covers this point.

(11) Does not arise out of the clarification of the resolution. Surely this is not asking for clarification of the resolution. I have in numerous speeches of mine and the Muslim League in its resolutions have pointed out that this is the only solution of India's problem and the road to achieve freedom and independence of the peoples of India.

(12) "Muslims under the Princes": The Lahore resolution is only confined to British India. This question does not arise out of the clarification of the resolution.

(13) The definition of "minorities": You yourself have often said "minorities" means "accepted minorities."

(14) The adequate, effective and mandatory safeguards for minorities, referred to in the resolution, are a matter for negotiation and settlement with the minorities in the respective States, *viz.*, Pakistan and Hindustan.

(15) It does give basic principles and when they are accepted then the details will have to be worked out by the contracting parties.

(a) Does not arise by way of clarification.

(b) Does not arise by way of clarification.

(c) The Muslim League is the only authoritative and representative organization of Muslim India.

(d) No; see answer (c).

As regards your final paragraph, before receiving clarifications from me you have already passed your judgment and condemned the Lahore resolution, when you say, "As I write this letter and imagine the working of the resolution in practice, I see nothing but ruin for the whole of India." I understand that you have made clear to me that you represent nobody but yourself, and I am trying to persuade you and to convert you that this is the road which will lead us to the

achievement of freedom and independence not only of the two major nations, Hindus and Muslims, but of the rest of the peoples of India, but when you proceed to say that you aspire to represent all the inhabitants of India, I regret I cannot accept that statement of yours.

It is quite clear that you represent nobody else but the Hindus, and as long as you do not realize your true position and the realities, it is very difficult for me to argue with you, and it becomes still more difficult to persuade you, and hope to convert you to the realities and the actual conditions prevailing in India today. I am pleading before you in the hope of converting you, as I have done with many others successfully.

As I have said before, you are a great man and you exercise enormous influence over the Hindus, particularly the masses, and by accepting the road that I am pointing out to you, you are not prejudicing or harming the interests of the Hindus or of the minorities. On the contrary, Hindus will be the greatest gainers. I am convinced that true welfare not only of the Muslims but the rest of India lies in the division of India as proposed by the Lahore resolution. It is for you to consider whether it is not your policy and programme in which you have persisted which has been the principal factor of the "ruin of whole of India" and of the misery and degradation of the people to which you refer and which I deplore no less than anyone else. And it is for that very reason I am pleading before you all these days, although you insist that you are having talks with me only in your individual capacity, in the hope that you may yet revise your policy and programme.

Yours sincerely,
M. A. JINNAH.

X

GANDHIJI TO MR JINNAH

September 19, 1944.

DEAR QAID-I-AZAM,

Many thanks for yours of 17th inst.

I am sorry to have to say that your answers, omitting 1, 2 and 6, do not give satisfaction.

It may be that all my questions do not arise from the view of mere clarification of the Lahore resolution. But I contend that they are very relevant from the standpoint of a seeker that I am. You cannot expect anyone to agree to, or shoulder the burden of the claim contained in the Lahore resolution without, for instance, answering my question 15 (a) and 15 (b) which you brush aside as not arising by way of clarification.

Dr Ambedkar's thesis, while it is ably written, has carried no conviction to me. The other book mentioned by you, I am sorry to say, I have not seen.

Why can you not accept my statement that I aspire to represent all the sections that compose the people of India? Do you not aspire? Should not every Indian? That the aspiration may never be realized is beside the point.

I am beholden to you, in spite of your opinion about me, for having patience with me; I hope you will never lose it but will persevere in your effort to convert me. I ask you to take me with my strong views and even prejudices, if I am guilty of any.

As to your verdict on my policy and programme, we must agree to differ. For, I am wholly unrepentant. My purpose is, as a lover of communal unity, to place my services at your disposal.

I hope you do not expect me to accept the Lahore resolution without understanding its implications. If your letter is the final word, there is little hope. Can we not agree to differ on the question of "two nations" and yet solve the problem on the basis of self-determination? It is this basis that has brought me to you. If the regions holding Muslim majorities have to be separated according to the Lahore resolution, the grave step of separation should be specifically placed before and approved by the people in that area.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI.

XI

MR JINNAH TO GANDHIJI

September 21, 1944.

DEAR MR GANDHI,

I am in receipt of your letter of September 19 and I have already given you my answers to all your questions relating to clarification of the Lahore resolution or any part of it, and I am glad that you admit when you say it may be that "all my questions do not arise from the view of mere clarification of the Lahore resolution," but you particularly emphasise your points 15 (a) and 15 (b).

I regret to say it has no relation to the context of the resolution or any part thereof. You have brought so many matters into our correspondence which are entirely outside the matter requiring clarification, so I have perforce to deal with them. Let me first deal with your letter of September 11.

You say: "My life-mission has been Hindu-Muslim unity which I want for its own sake but which is not to be achieved without the foreign ruling Power being ousted. Hence the first condition of the exercise of the right of self-determination is achieving of Independence by the joint action of all the parties and groups composing India. If such joint action is unfortunately impossible, then too I must fight with the assistance of such elements as can be brought together."

The gist of your letters up to date is that you are wedded to this

policy and will pursue it. In your next letter of September 14, while you were good enough to furnish me with the clarification of the Gandhi-Rajaji formula, you were pleased to observe: "I have, at any rate for the moment, put it out of my mind and I am now concentrating on the Lahore resolution in the hope of finding a ground for mutual agreement."

In your letter of September 15, you say: "Independence does mean as envisaged in the A.-I.C.C. resolution of 1942." It is therefore clear that you are not prepared to revise your policy and that you adhere firmly to your policy and programme which you have persisted in and which culminated in your demand, final policy, programme, and the method and sanction for enforcing it by resorting to mass civil disobedience in terms of the 8th August, 1942, resolution, and you have made it more clear again by stating in your letter of September 19 as follows:—"As to your verdict on my policy and programme, we must agree to differ, for, I am wholly unrepentant." You know that the August 1942 resolution is inimical to the ideals and demands of Muslim India.

Then, again, in the course of our discussion when I asked you for clarification of the Gandhi-Rajaji formula, you were pleased to say, by your letter of September 15, as follows:—"For the moment I have shunted the Rajaji formula and with your assistance am applying my mind very seriously to the famous Lahore resolution of the Muslim League." We discussed it in its various aspects, as you told me you were open to be persuaded and converted to our point of view. I discussed the resolution at great length with you, and explained everything you wanted to understand, even though you have emphasized more than once that you are having these talks with me in your personal capacity, and in your letter of September 15 you assured me in the following words with regard to the Lahore resolution: "Believe me, I approach you as a seeker, though I represent nobody but myself," and that you were open to conviction and conversion.

You had informed me by your letter of September 11 as follows: "It is true that I said an ocean separated you and me in outlook. But that had no reference to the Lahore resolution of the League. The League resolution is indefinite." I naturally therefore proceeded, in reply, to ask you by my letter of September 11 as follows:—"You say the Lahore resolution is indefinite. You never asked me for any clarification or explanation of the terms of the resolution; but you really indicated your emphatic opposition to the very basis and the fundamental principles embodied in it. I would, therefore, like to know in what way or respect the Lahore resolution is indefinite," and I sent you a reminder on September 13, to which you replied by your letter of September 15, not confining yourself really to matters of clarification, but introducing other extraneous matters, with some of which I had already dealt, in reply to this letter of yours of September 15, by my letter of

September 17, and furnished you with all the clarifications, informing you that you had introduced several matters which could hardly be discussed in a satisfactory manner by means of correspondence.

I have already given you all the clarifications you require so far as the Lahore resolution goes and its text is concerned. You again raise further arguments, reasons and grounds and continue to persist in a disquisition on the point, amongst others, whether Muslims of India are a nation, and then you proceed further to say: "Can we not agree to differ on the question of 'two nations' and yet solve the problem on the basis of self-determination?"

It seems to me that you are labouring under some misconception of the real meaning of the word "self-determination." Apart from the inconsistencies and contradictions of the various positions that you have adopted in the course of our correspondence, as indicated above, can you not appreciate our point of view that we claim the right of self-determination as a nation and not as a territorial unit, and that we are entitled to exercise our inherent right as a Muslim nation, which is our birthright? Whereas you are labouring under the wrong idea that "self-determination" means only that of "a territorial unit," which, by the way, is neither demarcated nor defined yet, and there is no union or federal constitution of India in being, functioning as a sovereign Central government. Ours is a case of division and carving out two independent sovereign States by way of settlement between two major nations, Hindus and Muslims, and not of severance or secession *from any existing union,* which is *non est* in India. The right of self-determination, which we claim, postulates that we are a nation, and as such it would be the self-determination of the Muslims, and they alone are entitled to exercise that right.

I hope you will now understand that your question 15(a) does not arise out of the Lahore resolution or of any part thereof. As to 15 (b), again it does not arise as a matter of clarification, for it will be a matter for the constitution-making body chosen by Pakistan to deal with and decide all matters as a sovereign body representing Pakistan *vis-a-vis* the constitution-making body of Hindustan or any other party concerned. There cannot be defence and similar matters of "common concern," when it is accepted that Pakistan and Hindustan will be two separate independent sovereign States. I hope I have now given all satisfactory explanations, over and above the matter of clarification of the Lahore resolution, in the hope of converting you as an individual "seeker."

Yours sincerely,
M. A. JINNAH.

XII

GANDHIJI TO MR JINNAH

September 22, 1944.

DEAR QAID-I-AZAM,

Your letter of yesterday (21st inst.) so disturbed me that I thought I would postpone my reply till after we had met at the usual time. Though I made no advance at our meeting, I think I see somewhat clearly what you are driving at. The more I think about the two nations theory the more alarming it appears to be. The book recommended by you gives me no help. It contains half-truths and its conclusions or inferences are unwarranted. I am unable to accept the proposition that the Muslims of India are a nation distinct from the rest of the inhabitants of India. Mere assertion is no proof. The consequences of accepting such a proposition are dangerous in the extreme. Once the principle is admitted there would be no limit to claims for cutting up India into numerous divisions which would spell India's ruin. I have therefore suggested a way out. Let it be a partition as between two brothers, if a division there must be.

You seem to be averse to a plebiscite. In spite of the admitted importance of the League, there must be clear proof that the people affected desire partition. In my opinion, all the people inhabiting the area ought to express their opinion specifically on this single issue of division. Adult suffrage is the best method, but I would accept any other equivalent.

You summarily reject the idea of common interest between the two arms. I can be no willing party to a division which does not provide for the simultaneous safeguarding of common interests such as defence, foreign affairs and the like. There will be no feeling of security by the people of India without a recognition of the natural and mutual obligations arising out of physical contiguity.

Your letter shows a wide divergence of opinion and outlook between us. Thus you adhere to the opinion often expressed by you that the August 1942 resolution is "inimical to the ideals and demands of Muslim India." There is no proof for this sweeping statement.

We seem to be moving in a circle. I have made a suggestion. If we are bent on agreeing, as I hope we are, let us call in a third party or parties to guide or even arbitrate between us.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI.

XIII
MR JINNAH TO GANDHIJI

September 23, 1944.

DEAR MR GANDHI,

I am in receipt of your letter of September 22, and I thank you for it. I am sorry that you think I have summarily rejected the idea of common interest between the two arms, and now you put it somewhat differently from 15 (b), when you say there will be no feeling of security by the people of India without a recognition of the natural and mutual obligations arising out of physical contiguity. My answer, already given, is that it will be for the constitution-making body of Pakistan and that of Hindustan or any other party concerned, to deal with such matters on the footing of their being two independent States.

I am really surprised when you say there is no proof of what you characterize as a sweeping statement of mine, that the August 1942, resolution is inimical to the ideals and demands of Muslim India. The resolution in its essence is as follows:

(a) immediate grant of complete Independence and setting up immediately of a federal Central government on the basis of a united, democratic Government of India with federated units or provinces, which means establishing a Hindu *raj*.

(b) that this National Government so set up will evolve a scheme for a constituent assembly, which will be chosen by adult franchise, which will prepare a constitution for the Government of India, which means that the constituent assembly chosen will be composed of an overwhelming majority of Hindus, nearly 75 per cent.

(c) to enforce this demand of the Congress the August resolution decides on and sanctions a resort to mass civil disobedience at your command and when ordered by you as the sole dictator of the Congress.

This demand is basically and fundamentally opposed to the ideals and demands of Muslim India of Pakistan, as embodied in the Lahore resolution, and to enforce such a demand by means of resort to mass civil disobedience is inimical to the ideals and demands of Muslim India; and if you succeed in realizing this demand, it would be a death-blow to Muslim India. I see from the correspondence and talks between you and me that you are still holding fast to this fateful resolution.

From the very first day of our talks you made it clear to me, and you have repeatedly said in the course of our correspondence and talks, that you have approached me in your individual capacity, and you assured me that you were a seeker of light and knowledge and that you seriously and earnestly wanted to understand the Lahore

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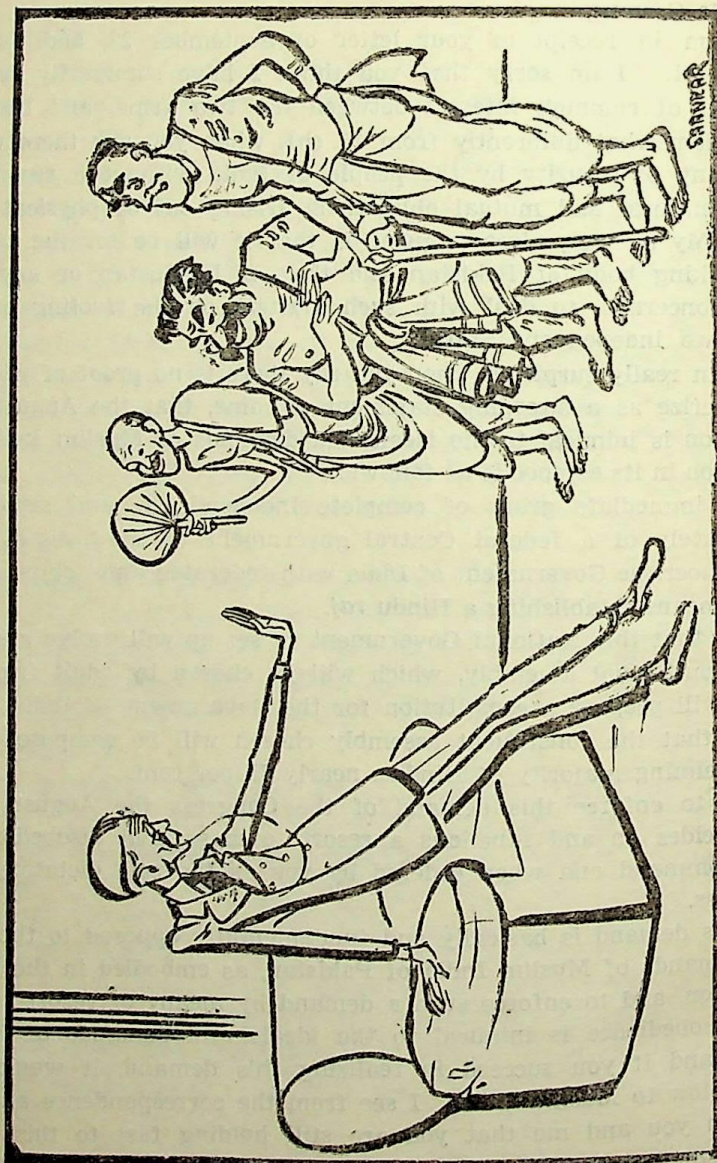

Lord Strabolgi suggests that President Roosevelt, Marshal Chiang Kai-shek and M. Stalin should be invited to help in the solution of the Indian problem. —*Hindustan Times*, 4-10-'44.

resolution and were open to conviction and conversion. Therefore, in deference to your wishes, I made every effort all these days and in the course of our prolonged talks and correspondence to convert you, but unfortunately, it seems, I have failed. And now you have made new suggestions and proposals by your letter under reply:

(1) You say: "I have therefore suggested a way out. Let it be a partition as between two brothers, if a division there must be." I really do not know what this means, and I would like you to elaborate this proposal and give me some rough outlines of this new idea of yours as to how and when the division is to take place, and in what way it is different from the division envisaged by the Lahore resolution.

(2) You say: "Let us call in a third party or parties to guide or even arbitrate between us." May I point out that you have repeatedly made clear to me that you are having these talks as an individual seeker? How can any question of a third party or parties to guide or arbitrate between us arise?

Yours sincerely,
M. A. JINNAH.

XIV

GANDHIJI TO MR JINNAH

September 23, 1944.

DEAR QAID-I-AZAM,

Last evening's talk has left a bad taste in the mouth. Our talks and our correspondence seem to run in parallel lines and never touch one another. We reached the breaking point last evening but, thank God, we were unwilling to part. We resumed discussion and suspended it in order to allow me to keep my time for the evening public prayer.

In order that all possible chance of making any mistake in a matter of this great importance may be removed, I would like you to give me in writing what precisely on your part you would want me to put my signature to.

I adhere to my suggestion that we may call in some outside assistance to help us at this stage.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI.

XV

MR JINNAH TO GANDHIJI

September 23, 1944.

DEAR MR GANDHI,

I am in receipt of your letter of September 23. May I refer you to my letter of today's date which I sent to you in reply to yours of September 22? I have nothing new or fresh to add,

but I may say that it is not a case of your being asked to put your signature as representing anybody till you clothe yourself with representative capacity and are vested with authority. We stand by, as I have already said, the basis and fundamental principles embodied in the Lahore resolution of March 1940. I appeal to you once more to revise your policy and programme, as the future of this subcontinent and the welfare of the peoples of India demand that you should face realities.

Yours sincerely,
M. A. JINNAH.

XVI

GANDHIJI TO MR JINNAH

September 24, 1944.

DEAR QAID-I-AZAM,

I have your two letters of September 23 in reply to my letters of the 22nd and 23rd.

With your assistance, I am exploring the possibilities of reaching an agreement, so that the claim embodied in the Muslim League resolution of Lahore may be reasonably satisfied. You must therefore have no apprehensions that the August resolution will stand in the way of our reaching an agreement. That resolution dealt with the question of India as against Britain and it cannot stand in the way of our settlement.

I proceed on the assumption that India is not to be regarded as two or more nations but as one family consisting of many members of whom the Muslims living in the north-west zones, *i.e.*, Baluchistan, Sind, North-West Frontier Province and that part of the Punjab where they are in absolute majority over all the other elements and in parts of Bengal and Assam where they are in absolute majority, desire to live in separation from the rest of India.

Differing from you on the general basis, I can yet recommend to the Congress and the country the acceptance of the claim for separation contained in the Muslim League resolution of Lahore of 1940, on my basis and on the following terms:

The areas should be demarcated by a Commission approved by the Congress and the League. The wishes of the inhabitants of the areas demarcated should be ascertained through the votes of the adult population of the areas or through some equivalent method.

If the vote is in favour of separation it shall be agreed that these areas shall form a separate State as soon as possible after India is free from foreign domination and can therefore be constituted into two sovereign independent States.

There shall be a treaty of separation which should also provide for the efficient and satisfactory administration of foreign affairs, defence,

internal communications, customs, commerce and the like, which must necessarily continue to be matters of common interest between the contracting parties.

The treaty shall also contain terms for safeguarding the rights of minorities in the two States.

Immediately on the acceptance of this agreement by the Congress and the League the two shall decide upon a common course of action for the attainment of independence of India.

The League will however be free to remain out of any direct action to which the Congress may resort and in which the League may not be willing to participate.

If you do not agree to these terms, could you let me know in precise terms what you would have me to accept in terms of the Lahore resolution and bind myself to recommend to the Congress? If you could kindly do this, I shall be able to see, apart from the difference in approach, what definite terms I can agree to. In your letter of September 23, you refer to "the basic and fundamental principles embodied in the Lahore resolution" and ask me to accept them. Surely this is unnecessary when, as I feel, I have accepted the concrete consequence that should follow from such acceptance.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI.

XVII
MR JINNAH TO GANDHIJI

September 25, 1944.

DEAR MR GANDHI,

I am in receipt of your letter of September 24, and I thank you for it. You have already rejected the basis and fundamental principles of the Lahore resolution.

You do not accept that the Mussalmans of India are a nation.

You do not accept that the Mussalmans have an inherent right of self-determination.

You do not accept that they alone are entitled to exercise this right of theirs for self-determination.

You do not accept that Pakistan is composed of two zones, North-West and North-East, comprising six provinces, namely Sind, Baluchistan, North-West Frontier Province, the Punjab, Bengal and Assam, subject to territorial adjustments that may be agreed upon, as indicated in the Lahore resolution. The matter of demarcating and defining the territories can be taken up after the fundamentals above-mentioned are accepted, and for that purpose machinery may be set up by agreement.

You do not accept the provisions embodied in the Lahore resolution for safeguarding the minorities, and yet in your letter under reply you say: "With your assistance, I am exploring the possibilities of reaching

an agreement so that the claim embodied in the Muslim League resolution of Lahore may be reasonably satisfied," and proceed to say, "You must therefore have no apprehensions that the August resolution will stand in the way of our reaching an agreement."

I have already clearly explained to you that the August resolution, so long as it stands, is a bar, for it is fundamentally opposed to the Lahore resolution. You then proceed to say: "That resolution dealt with the question of India as against Britain, and it cannot stand in the way of our settlement." I am not at present concerned with Britain, but the August resolution, as I have already stated, is against the ideals and demands of the Muslim League. Further, there is the resolution of Jagat Narayan Lal, passed by the All-India Congress Committee in May 1942, at Allahabad, which, in express terms, lays down as follows:

> "The A.-I.C.C. is of opinion that any proposal to disintegrate India by giving liberty to any component State or territorial unit to secede from the Indian Union or Federation will be highly detrimental to the best interests of the people of the different States and provinces and the country as a whole and the Congress, therefore, cannot agree to any such proposal."

These two resolutions, so long as they stand, are a complete bar to any settlement on the basis of the division of India as Pakistan and Hindustan. It is open to the Congress to revise and modify them, but you are only speaking in your individual capacity, and even in that capacity you are holding fast to the August resolution, and you have given no indication of your attitude regarding Jagat Narayan Lal's resolution. I have repeatedly made it clear after we had discussed the Gandhi-Rajaji formula, as you maintained that, to use your own language, "Rajaji not only has not put the Lahore resolution out of shape and mutilated it but has given it substance and form," and proceeded to say: "Indeed in view of your dislike of the Rajaji formula, I have, at any rate for the moment, put it out of my mind and I am now concentrating on the Lahore resolution in the hope of finding a ground for mutual agreement."

When I asked for further clarification, which you furnished me by your letter of September 15, you started by saying: "I have shunted the Rajaji formula and with your assistance I am applying my mind very seriously to the famous Lahore resolution of the Muslim League," and thenceforward the Gandhi-Rajaji formula was not discussed any further, and the question of your representative character and authority, which I had pointed out from the very commencement, therefore, did not arise, as you had given me the task of converting you to the fundamentals of the Lahore resolution, and ever since we discussed the

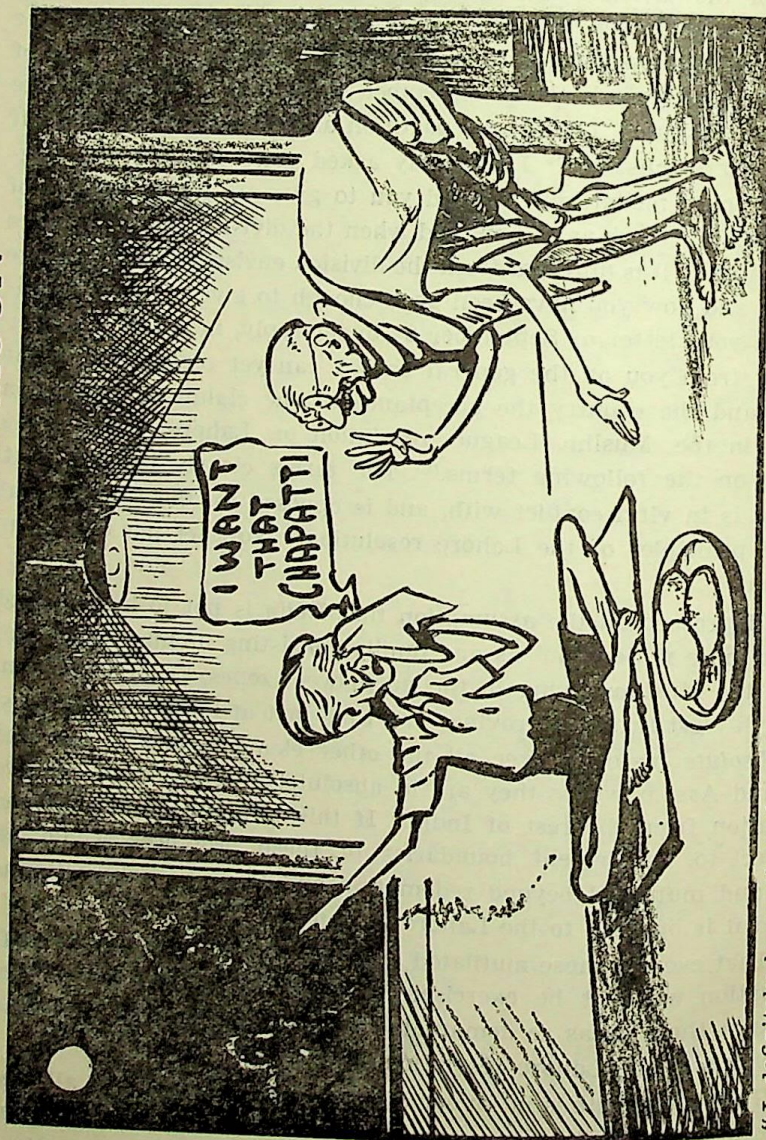
Lahore resolution only at great length and examined the *pros and cons*, and finally you have rejected it.

As a result of our correspondence and discussions I find that the question of the division of India as Pakistan and Hindustan is only on your lips and it does not come from your heart, and suddenly at the eleventh hour you put forward a new suggestion, consisting only of two sentences, by your letter of September 22, saying: "I have therefore suggested a way out. Let it be a partition as between two brothers, if a division there must be." I naturally asked you what this new suggestion of yours meant, and wanted you to give me rough outlines of this new idea of yours as to how and when the division is to take place and in what way it is different from the division envisaged in the Lahore resolution, and now you have been good enough to give me your amplification, in your letter of September 24 under reply, in which you say: "Differing from you on the general basis I can yet recommend to the Congress and the country the acceptance of the claim for separation contained in the Muslim League resolution of Lahore, 1940, on *my basis* and on the following terms." The terms clearly indicate that your basis is in vital conflict with, and is opposed to, the fundamental basis and principles of the Lahore resolution. Now let me take your main terms:

(a) "I proceed on the assumption that India is not to be regarded as two or more nations but as one family consisting of many members of whom the Muslims living in the north-west zones, *i.e.*, Baluchistan, Sind, North-West Frontier Province and that part of Punjab where they are in *absolute* majority over all the other elements and in parts of Bengal and Assam where they are in absolute majority, desire to live in separation from the rest of India." If this term were accepted and given effect to, the present boundaries of these provinces would be maimed and mutilated beyond redemption and leave us only with the husk, and it is opposed to the Lahore resolution.

(b) That even in those mutilated areas so defined, the right of self-determination will not be exercised by the Muslims but by the inhabitants of those areas so demarcated. This again is opposed to the fundamentals of the Lahore resolution.

(c) That if the vote is in favour of separation they shall be allowed to "form a separate State as soon as possible after India is free from foreign domination." Whereas we propose that we should come to a complete settlement of our own immediately, and by our united front and efforts do everything in our power to secure the freedom and independence of the peoples of India on the basis of Pakistan and Hindustan.

CRYING FOR THE MOON

"I definitely knew that the talks would come to nothing, for Mr Jinnah, as I knew him, is an ultra-extremist and obstinate."—N. C. Kelkar.

—*Hindustan Times*, 3-10-'44.

[Mahatma Gandhi sent a present of specially baked 'chapatis' to Mr Jinnah on Id Day which fell during the talks.]

(d) Next you say, 'There shall be a treaty of separation which should also provide for the efficient and satisfactory administration of foreign affairs, defence, internal communications, customs, commerce, and the like, which must necessarily continue to be matters of common interest between the contracting parties." If these vital matters are to be administered by some Central authority, you do not indicate what sort of authority or machinery will be set up to administer these matters, and how and to whom again that authority will be responsible. According to the Lahore resolution, as I have already explained to you, all these matters, which are the lifeblood of any State, cannot be delegated to any Central authority or government. The matter of security of the two States and the natural and mutual obligations that may arise out of physical contiguity will be for the constitution-making body of Pakistan and that of Hindustan, or other party concerned, to deal with on the footing of their being two independent States. As regards the safeguarding of the rights of minorities, I have already explained that this question of safeguarding the minorities is fully stated in the Lahore resolution.

You will therefore see that the entire basis of your new proposal is fundamentally opposed to the Lahore resolution, and as I have already pointed out to you, both in the correspondence and in our discussions, it is very difficult for me to entertain counter-proposals and negotiate and reach any agreement or settlement with you as an individual, unless they come from you in your representative capacity. That was the same difficulty with regard to the Gandhi-Rajaji formula, and I made it clear to you at the very outset, but the formula was discussed as you asserted that it had met the Lahore resolution in substance, but while you were furnishing me with the clarification of this formula, you shunted it and we confined ourselves to the Lahore resolution, and hence the question of your representative capacity did not arise regarding this formula. But now you have, in your letter of September 24, made a new proposal of of your own on your own basis, and the same difficulties present themselves to me as before, and it is difficult to deal with it any further unless it comes from you in your representative capacity.

I cannot agree with you when you finally wind up by saying: "In your letter of September 23, you refer to 'the basis and fundamental principles embodied in the Lahore resolution' and ask me to accept them. Surely this is unnecessary when, as I feel, I have accepted the concrete consequence that should follow from such acceptance." This is obviously far from correct. Why not then accept the fundamentals of the Lahore resolution and proceed to settle the details?

Yours sincerely,
M. A. JINNAH.

XVIII

GANDHIJI TO MR JINNAH

September 25, 1944.

DEAR QAID-I-AZAM,

Yesterday's talk leads me to inflict this letter on you which I trust you will not mind.

Our conversations have come about as a result of your correspondence with Rajaji in July last over his formula and your consultations with the League Working Committee thereon, and my own letter to you suggesting a meeting between you and me. My proposal of yesterday is an earnest effort to meet the essential requirements of the Lahore resolution. I would like you therefore to think fifty times before throwing away an offer which has been made entirely in the spirit of service in the cause of communal harmony. Do not take, I pray, the responsibility of rejecting the offer. Throw it on your Council. Give me an opportunity of addressing them. If they feel like rejecting it, I would like you to advise the Council to put it before the open session of the League. If you will accept my advice and permit me I would attend the open session and address it.

You are too technical when you dismiss my proposal for arbitration or outside guidance over points of difference. If I have approached you as an individual, and not in any representative capacity, it is because we believe that if I reach an agreement with you it will be of material use in the process of securing a Congress-League settlement and acceptance of it by the country. Is it irrelevant or inadmissible to supplement our efforts to convince each other with outside help, guidance, advice or even arbitration?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI.

XIX

MR JINNAH TO GANDHIJI

September 26, 1944.

DEAR MR GANDHI,

I am in receipt of your letter of September 25. It is entirely incorrect and has no foundation in fact for you to say that our conversations have come about as a result of my correspondence with Rajaji in July last over his formula. It is equally baseless to say "and your consultations with the League Working Committee thereon." It was entirely in response to your letter of July 17, 1944, which I received while I was at Srinagar, with a fervent request on your part to meet you and you ended that letter by saying: "Do not disappoint me." In my reply, again from Srinagar, dated July 24, 1944, I intimated to you that I would be glad to receive you at my house in Bombay on

my return, which would probably be about the middle of August. This was long before the meeting of the Working Committee or that of the Council of the All-India Muslim League, and long before I reached Lahore, and when you arrived here and told me that you were approaching me in your individual capacity, I at once made it clear to you and informed you both in our talks and by my letters, that the position you had taken up had no precedent for it, and further that it was not possible to negotiate and reach an agreement unless both the parties were fully represented; for it is one-sided business, as it will not be binding upon any organization in any sense whatever, but you would as an individual only recommend it, if any agreement is reached, to the Congress and the country, whereas it would be binding upon me as the President of the Muslim League. I cannot accept this position. I hope you do see the unfairness and the great disadvantage to me, and it is so simple and elementary for anyone to understand.

As regards your proposal of yesterday, which you have amplified in your letter of September 24, I have already sent you my reply.

With regard to your suggestion to be allowed to address the meeting of the Council, and if they feel like rejecting your "offer" the matter should be put before the open session and should be allowed to address the open session, let me inform you that only a member or delegate is entitled to participate in the deliberations of the meetings of the Council or in the open session, respectively. Besides it is a most extraordinary and unprecedented suggestion to make. However, I thank you for your advice.

As regards your proposal for arbitration and outside guidance, I have already replied to you, and it is not merely technicality but a matter of substance. I fully reciprocate your desire of securing a Congress-League settlement.

However, I regret I have failed to convince you and convert you as I was hopeful of doing so.

Yours sincerely,
M. A. JINNAH.

XX

GANDHIJI TO MR JINNAH

September 26, 1944.

DEAR QAID-I-AZAM,

In view of my letter to you of yesterday, left to myself, I would have refrained from dealing with your letter before our meeting today. But I have deferred to Rajaji's advice to finish the chain of correspondence.

I confess I am unable to understand your persistent refusal to appreciate the fact that the formula presented to you by me in my

letter of the 24th, as well as the formula presented to you by Rajaji, gave you virtually what is embodied in the Lahore resolution, providing at the same time what is absolutely necessary to make the arrangement acceptable to the country. You keep on saying that I should accept certain theses which you call the basis and fundamental principles of the Lahore resolution, while I have been contending that the best way for us who differ in our approach to the problem is to give body to the demand as it stands in the resolution and work it out to our mutual satisfaction. It is on this plan that I understand Rajaji's formula to be conceived, and it is on the same plan that I have tried to work it out in the course of, and as a result of, our talks. I contend that either gives you the substance of the Lahore resolution. Unfortunately you reject both. And I cannot accept the Lahore resolution as you want me to, especially when you seek to introduce into its interpretation theories and claims which I cannot accept and which I cannot ever hope to induce India to accept.

Your constant references to my not being clothed with representative authority are really irrelevant. I have approached you so that, if you and I can agree upon a common course of action, I may use what influence I possess for its acceptance by the Congress and the country. If you break, it cannot be because I have no representative capacity or because I have been unwilling to give you satisfaction in regard to the claim embodied in the Lahore resolution.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI.

XXI

MR JINNAH TO GANDHIJI

September 26, 1944.

DEAR MR GANDHI,

I have received your letter of September 26 and I note that you have written it with Rajaji's advice. Of course, it is for you to follow such advice as you may choose to do so, but I am only concerned for the moment with you. I note that at the last moment you have resurrected the Gandhi-Rajaji formula, although it was shunted all this time, and you proceed to say that this formula gives me virtually what is embodied in the Lahore resolution. You further say that on the same plan you have tried to formulate your latest proposals, as mentioned in your letter of September 24, and you maintain that either gives me the substance of the Lahore resolution. In your previous letter you asserted that your formula gives me the "essence" of the Lahore resolution. I see a very close family resemblance between the two, and the substance of one or the other is practically the same, only it is put in different language, and I have already expressed my opinion that, in my judgment, they neither meet the substance nor essence of

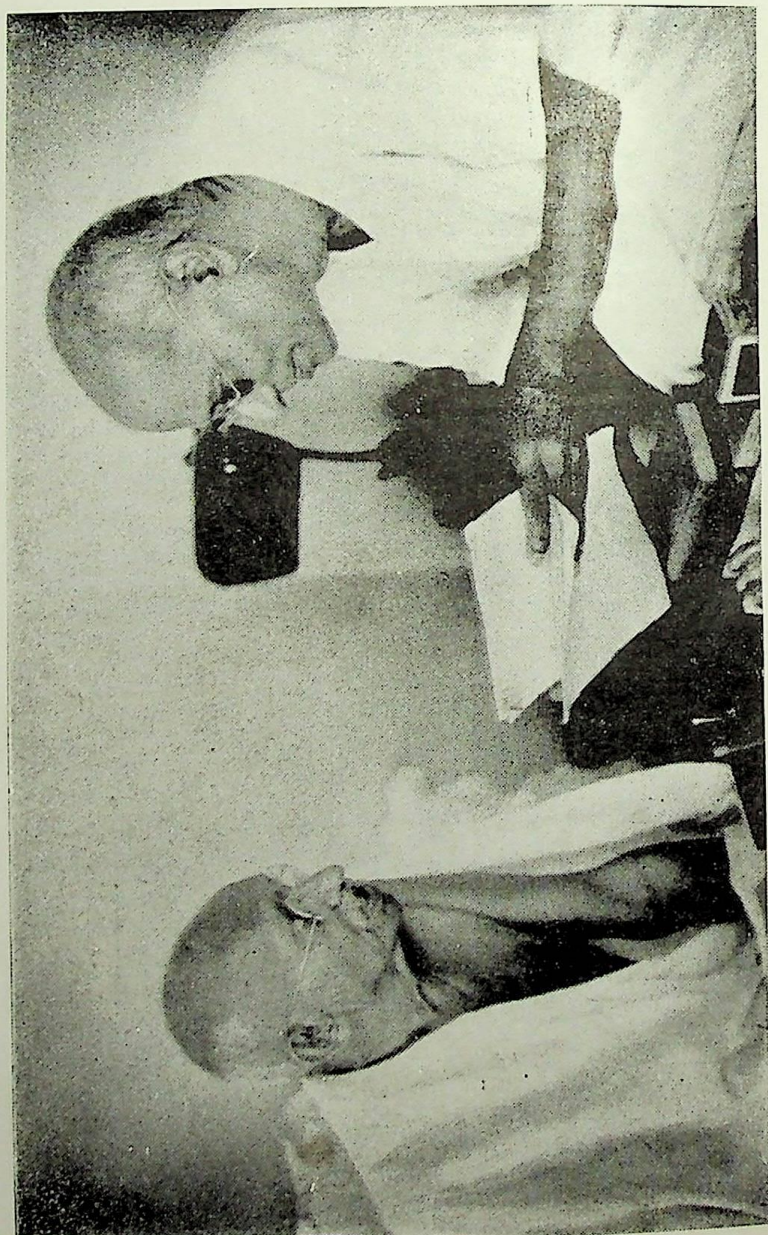



Photo: Kanu Gandhi

Mahatma Gandhi and Mr C. Rajagopalachari at work at Bombay during the talks.

the Lahore resolution. On the contrary, both are calculated completely to torpedo the Pakistan demand of Muslim India. I have never asked you to accept certain theses, nor have I introduced any theories in the Lahore resolution. Theses and theories are matters for scholars to indulge in.

I am sorry I have to repeat, but I am compelled to do so, that I cannot agree with you that my references to your not being clothed with representative authority are really irrelevant. On the contrary, they have an important bearing, as I have already explained to you more than once. You again repeat that if you and I can agree upon a common course of action, you may use what influence you possess for its acceptance by the Congress and the country. I have already stated from the very beginning that that is not enough, for the reasons I have already given. Your representative capacity comes into play when you are making counter-proposals, and I cannot understand how you can say that it is irrelevant. No responsible organization can entertain any proposal from any individual, however great he may be, unless it is backed up with the authority of a recognized organization and comes from its fully accredited representative. However, I need not labour this point any more, as I have already explained it in our previous correspondence.

If a break comes, it will be because you have not satisfied me in regard to the essence of the claim embodied in the Lahore resolution. It is not a question of your being unwilling, but in fact it is so. If a break comes, it will be most unfortunate. If one does not agree with you or differs from you, you are always right and the other party is always wrong, and the next thing is that many are waiting prepared, in your circle, to pillory me when the word goes, but I must face all threats and consequences, and I can only act according to my judgment and conscience.

Yours sincerely,
M. A. JINNAH.

C. R. FORMULA

Basis for terms of settlement between the Indian National Congress and the All-India Muslim League to which Gandhiji and Mr. Jinnah agree and which they will endeavour respectively to get the Congress and the League to approve:

(1) Subject to the terms set out below as regards the constitution for Free India, the Muslim League endorses the Indian demand for Independence and will co-operate with the Congress in the formation of a provisional interim Government for the transitional period.

(2) After the termination of the war, a commission shall be appointed for demarcating contiguous districts in the north-west and east of India, wherein the Muslim population is in absolute majority. In the areas thus demarcated, a plebiscite of all the inhabitants held on the basis of adult suffrage or other practicable franchise shall ultimately decide the issue of separation from Hindustan. If the majority decide in favour of forming a sovereign State separate from Hindustan, such decision shall be given effect to, without prejudice to the right of districts on the border to choose to join either State.

(3) It will be open to all parties to advocate their points of view before the plebiscite is held.

(4) In the event of separation, mutual agreements shall be entered into for safeguarding defence, and commerce and communications and for other essential purposes.

(5) Any transfer of population shall only be on an absolutely voluntary basis.

(6) These terms shall be binding only in case of transfer by Britain of full power and responsibility for the governance of India.

LAHORE RESOLUTION OF MARCH 1940

"It is the considered view of this session of the All-India Muslim League that no constitutional plan would be workable in this country or acceptable to the Muslims unless it is designed on the following basic principles, *viz.*, that geographically contiguous units are demarcated into regions which should be so constituted with such territorial re-adjustments as may be necessary that the areas in which the Muslims are numerically in a majority, as in the North-Western and Eastern

zones of India, should be grouped to constitute independent States in which the constituent units shall be autonomous and sovereign. Adequate, effective and mandatory safeguards should be specifically provided in the constitution for minorities in the units and in the regions for the protection of their religious, cultural, economic, political, administrative and other rights and interests in consultation with them and in other parts of India where the Mussalmans are in a minority, adequate, effective and mandatory safeguards shall be specifically provided in the Constitution for them and other minorities, for the protection of their religious, cultural economic, political, administrative and other rights and interests in consultation with them. The session further authorizes the Working Committee to frame a scheme of Constitution in accordance with these basic principles, providing for the assumption finally by the respective regions of all powers such as defence, external affairs, communications, customs and such other matters as may be necessary."

CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE'S RESOLUTION ON NON-ACCESSION OF PROVINCES

"The acceptance beforehand of the novel principle of non-accession for a province is also a severe blow to the conception of Indian unity and an apple of discord likely to generate growing trouble in the provinces, and which may well lead to further difficulties in the way of the Indian States merging themselves in the Indian Union. The Congress has been wedded to Indian freedom and unity and any break in that unity, especially in the modern world when people's minds inevitably think in terms of ever larger federations, would be injurious to all concerned and exceedingly painful to contemplate. Nevertheless, the Committee cannot think in terms of compelling the people in any territorial unit to remain in an Indian Union against their declared and established will. While recognizing this principle, the Committee feel that every effort should be made to create conditions which would help the different units in developing a common and co-operative national life. The acceptance of the principle inevitably involves that no changes should be made which result in fresh problems being created and compulsion being exercised on other substantial groups within that area."—*Resolution of the Congress Working Committee dated April 2, communicated to Sir Stafford Cripps, and released to the Press on April 10, 1942.*

" BANKRUPTCY OF WISDOM "

GANDHIJI'S SPEECH AFTER PRAYER

Speaking in Hindustani at the end of the prayers at Bombay, on September 11, Gandhiji as usual appealed for contributions to the Harijan Fund. Referring next to the exuberant affection of the crowd on the previous evening he said that after years of training such exhibition was a reflection on the good name of Bombay. It was a bad sign. But for the precautions taken on the spur of the moment he and some of the sisters accompanying him might have been hurt and so too Mr Shantikumar. And what is more, in the confusion, the latter might have easily lost the Harijan purse that he was carrying. They knew how jealous he was of every pie belonging to the Harijans. Therefore he requested the public never again to repeat the performance of the day before. Why should the volunteers have to form a cordon around him? He did not want to have any guard. God alone was his guard. He was doing God's work and he had faith that so long as He required his services He would protect him.

Referring to his meeting with Mr Jinnah he said he knew how eager they must be to be acquainted with the progress of the talks. It was a natural eagerness on their part which he would like to satisfy as far as possible consistently with the interest of the cause which they all shared with him in common.

All that he could say at the present stage was that Jinnah Saheb and he had met as old friends on Saturday (September 9), and again that day (Monday). He added that they would be meeting again the next day from 10-30 a.m. to 1 p.m. and from 5-30 to 7 p.m. This would leave them a little time to attend to other work and to digest the substance of the talks. They fully realized what a heavy responsibility rested on their shoulders. They knew that millions were watching the talks and were anxious that a settlement should be arrived at which would subserve the interests not of any particular group or community, but of the whole of India. "Our goal is the attainment of independence for the whole of India. It is for that we pray and are pledged to lay down our lives," said Gandhiji. Jinnah Saheb and he had only God between them as witness. Gandhiji proceeded: "My constant prayer these days is that He may so guide my speech that not a word might escape my lips so as to hurt the feelings of Jinnah Saheb or damage the cause that is dear to us both. I am sure the same is the case with Jinnah Saheb. He told me today, 'If we part without coming to an agreement, we shall proclaim bank-

ruptcy of wisdom on our part'. What is more, the hopes of millions of our countrymen will be dashed to pieces. Today the eyes of all the oppressed people of the world are on us. We therefore are fully alive to our responsibility and are straining every nerve to come to a settlement. But we realize that ultimately the result lies in God's good hands. You should therefore all pray that He may guide us and give us wisdom to serve the cause of India."

In conclusion, Mahatma Gandhi appealed to the Press to put a curb on their inventiveness and not to give free rein to their imagination. Since neither he nor Mr Jinnah were opening their lips to anybody there could be no question of leakage.

GANDHIJI'S EXHORTATION FOR ID

At the end of the evening prayers on September, 19, Gandhiji gave a short message in Hindustani to the people assembled there in connection with Id.

He did not know how many Mussalman brothers and sisters were there in the audience, but there was at least one, namely, Raihanabehn Tyebje. That was enough for his present purpose. His earnest prayer to all present was that if they had the good of the country at heart and wanted India to be free and independent at the earliest moment they should establish the closest bonds of friendship between Hindus and Mussalmans and members of all other communities. That was the least that every one of them was expected to do and could do. Was there any one among them who doubted that if they could become one at heart the coming of Independence would be accelerated? Ever since his return to India he had been proclaiming that truth from house-tops. That did not mean that they could afford to rest in idleness and freedom would by itself drop into their lap. If that was realized many other things would follow as a matter of course.

Referring to his talks with Qaid-i-Azam Jinnah he said that he considered it to be their great good fortune that they were having their friendly talks. He was not at liberty to divulge the nature of their talks. But they could rest satisfied that they were not talking without hope. The day he felt that there was no more hope he would not hesitate to say so. He wanted them all to fraternize with one another on the Id Day and pray that God may guide them aright.

Concluding, he warned the people against putting faith in speculations in which both the foreign and the Indian Press were indulging.

"NO CAUSE FOR DISAPPOINTMENT"

STATEMENTS BY MR JINNAH AND GANDHIJI

The following statement was handed to Pressmen by Mr Jinnah along with the text of the correspondence on the evening of September 27:—

Mr Gandhi from the very commencement of our talks made it clear that he had approached me in his individual capacity and that he represented no one but himself. However, he assured me that he was really open to conviction and conversion to the Muslim League Lahore resolution of March 1940.

Without prejudice to my objection that in order to reach any settlement, negotiations can only be carried on properly when the other side is also fully represented and vested with authority, in deference to Mr Gandhi's wishes I agreed to the task of persuading and converting him to the fundamentals of the Lahore resolution.

I have placed before him everything and every aspect of the Muslim point of view in the course of our prolonged talks and correspondence, and we discussed all the pros and cons generally, and I regret to say that I have failed in my task of converting Mr Gandhi.

We have, therefore, decided to release to the Press the correspondence that has passed between us.

Nevertheless, we hope that the public will not feel embittered, and we trust that this is not the final end of our effort.

GANDHIJI'S SPEECH AT PRAYER

At the end of the evening public prayer which took place immediately after his last interview with Mr Jinnah on September 27 Gandhiji addressed the audience. Speaking in Gujarati, he said he was not addressing them in Hindustani as before because he wanted his words to go straight to the hearts of the audience most of whom were Gujaratis. He had particularly the women in mind who were not accustomed to Hindustani speech.

He had told them that when the talks were over he would let them know the result. That stage had been reached the day before but as copies of the correspondence were not ready its actual release had to be postponed till that day. Authorized copies of the correspondence had now been sent to the Press with a prefatory statement by the Qaid-i-Azam.

Hitherto he had told them that he was not without hope with regard to the outcome of the talks. He had to confess that the result that he was hoping for had not materialized. But he had no sense of

disappointment or despondency. He was convinced that even out of that breakdown good would result.

Although the Qaid-i-Azam and he had known each other fairly well in public life before, they had never come into such close personal contact. Their conversations were carried out with friendliness and cordiality. He wanted all the communities to cultivate the same spirit of friendliness and cordiality in their relations with one another. They should try to convert one another through it.

They might ask, why was it then that he and the Qaid-i-Azam had failed to convert each other? His reply was that he had tried his level best to go as far as he could to meet the Qaid-i-Azam's viewpoint. He had taken incalculable pains to understand him and to make himself understood. But he had failed.

He had placed before the Qaid-i-Azam Rajaji's formula but that did not command itself to him. He had thereupon put forth another proposal of his own in its place but even that had failed to secure Jinnah Saheb's approval. In the same way, Jinnah Saheb's proposal had failed to commend itself to him. If either of them had been weak, they would have possibly come to some sort of agreement but as responsible men they could not afford to be weak. A helmsman had to be firm and unwavering or else the ship would founder upon the rocks. Each one of them had tried to convince the other. It was possible that both of them might be in the wrong. But so long as each felt himself to be in the right he could not let go his hold.

The news of the breakdown he knew would cause grief to the friends of India and might give cause for jubilation to their enemies. He drew their attention to the last sentence in their statement in which he had said that it was not the final end of their effort.

Although they had been unable to appreciate each other's viewpoint, the public could help them to do so. They should not lose heart. If there was any one who had reason to feel disappointed it was he. He had knocked at the Qaid-i-Azam's door. But as he had already observed there was no despondency in him. It was not for a votary of truth and non-violence to feel despondent if his effort at times failed to yield the result aimed at. Failure should only serve as spur to further effort. God alone knew what was best for them. It was not for them to question God's ways. Therefore, instead of feeling despondent they should regard the breakdown as a challenge to their faith and as an incentive for greater effort for establishing true unity among the various communities.

"ADJOURNED 'SINE DIE'"

GANDHIJI ADDRESSES PRESS

On September 28 Mahatma Gandhi held a Press conference attended by about 40 Indian and foreign journalists. He read the following statement:

"It is a matter of deep regret that we two could not reach an agreement. But there is no cause for disappointment. The breakdown is only so called. It is an adjournment *sine die*. Each one of us must now talk to the public and put our viewpoints before them. If we do so dispassionately and if the public co-operate, we may reach a solution of the seemingly insoluble at an early date. My experience of the precious three weeks confirms me in the view that the presence of the third power hinders the solution. A mind enslaved cannot act as if it was free. I need not impute base motives to the Rulers to prove what seems to me to be an axiomatic truth. Nevertheless, I am going to continue to work for the solution as I have been during these three weeks. The questions for consideration are simple. Has the Rajaji formula or mine made a reasonable approach to the Lahore resolution? If they or either of them is such an approach all parties and especially the members of the Muslim League should ask the Qaid-i-Azam to revise his opinion. If Rajaji and I have stultified the Lahore resolution we should be educated. The chief thing is for the Press and the public to avoid partisanship and bitterness."

"I shall act as my inner voice tells me," replied Mahatma Gandhi to a question on his future plans, whether he proposed to concentrate on a Hindu-Muslim settlement or take up political work, seeking imprisonment if necessary.

Asked how far the offer he had made had conceded the demand made in the Lahore resolution of the League, Mahatma Gandhi emphasized that the Rajaji formula or the formula that he presented conceded the substance of the League demand.

"In my opinion, either formula gives as much as can reasonably be expected with due regard to the interests of the whole of India," he said.

In answer to a question whether his offer was to be treated now as withdrawn, he said that so far as he was concerned the offer he had made stood. It was not made in any bargaining spirit.

"I think," he said, "it is a just solution of the problem and it is

in the spirit of the policy which the Congress has consistently adopted in connection with the communal question, namely, self-determination."

A number of questions were put on the representative character of the two leaders who conducted the negotiations and why Mahatma Gandhi prolonged the talks when he was apprised of Mr Jinnah's views on the first day of the talks.

Mahatma Gandhi answered: "I am a man reputed to have inexhaustible patience and I had no reason to despair of either being converted by the Qaid-i-Azam or in my turn converting him. Therefore, so long as there was the slightest possibility, I clung to the hope that we shall pull through to a solution. Haste in such cases is a most dangerous thing. You should, therefore, conclude that yesterday was really the moment when the public should have been taken into confidence.

"As for myself, I am entirely satisfied that we have not wasted these three weeks. I have no doubt whatsoever that we know now each other better than ever before."

"When you agreed to meet Mr Jinnah, did you meet him on the basis that he was the sole representative of the Muslims?" asked a reporter.

Mahatma Gandhi replied: "I have never admitted that claim, but I have said throughout that the Muslim League is by far the most representative Muslim organization. It would have been folly on my part not to recognize this, but I have always been aware that there is outside the League a large body of Muslims which does not see eye to eye with the League and which does not believe in the two nations theory."

Mahatma Gandhi asserted that the fight for freedom had not been suspended when he approached the Qaid-i-Azam. "My approach to the Qaid-i-Azam was itself a part of the fight for freedom," he said.

Asked if there was any possibility of the two leaders meeting again in the near future, Mahatma Gandhi said: "I hope so. It is for the Press and the public to make it possible and hasten the date. I assure you that we have not parted as enemies, but as friends."

If the Rajaji formula or his own formula had conceded the substance of the Lahore resolution, then why not agree to the resolution itself? was the next question.

Mahatma Gandhi replied: "Although the resolution does not say so, if you study the correspondence, it shows that it is based on the two nations theory and it has been known as the Pakistan resolution. Further, I had to examine the resolution in view of the interpretation

put upon it by the Qaid-i-Azam in his numerous speeches and statements in elucidation of the resolution. It is indisputable that the resolution, while it does not enunciate that theory, is based upon that theory. The Qaid-i-Azam has insisted upon that. Therefore, I urge that apart from the two nations theory, if I could accept the principle of division of India in accordance with the demand of the League, he should accept it. But unfortunately it was just there we split."

Asked about Mr Jinnah's views regarding a provisional interim Government, he said: "I am not sure that the Qaid-i-Azam puts great weight on the interim Government. I gave all the explanation of my conception of an interim Government without any reservation. It is quite clear in my letter. If I did not go any further, it was because I could not and, even if you cross-examine me any further, I would have to say I could not go any further. But if, as you suggest, the Qaid-i-Azam attached greater weight to it, then it was open to him to put it into concrete form. I would have then taxed myself and spared no effort to accept the proposition or to make some other suggestions."

Mahatma Gandhi was told that those Muslims who did not see eye to eye with the League had no real Muslim backing. He replied: "Therefore, I have said that the League is by far the more representative of Muslim opinion, but I cannot despise the others by simply saying that they have no Muslim backing. What does it matter if they have no more Muslim backing if the opinion represented by a single Muslim, or by a body of Muslims whom you can count on your fingers, is intrinsically sound? The way of approaching a question is not to examine the numerical strength of those behind the opinion, but to examine the soundness of the opinion on merits, or else we will never reach a solution, and if we reach one, it will be a blind solution simply because it is the wish of the largest body. If the largest body goes wrong, it is up to me to say you are wrong and not to submit.

"The rule of majority does not mean that it should suppress the opinion of even an individual, if it is sound. An individual's opinion should have greater weight than the opinion of many, if that opinion is sound on merits. That is my view of real democracy."

Mahatma Gandhi was asked what he thought of the idea of formation of provinces on linguistic, cultural and communal basis. He replied that since 1920 he was for provinces on a linguistic basis.

As for redistribution on a cultural basis, he did not really know what it meant and he was unable to understand how provinces could be reconstituted on communal lines unless there was a suggestion

that there should be inter-migration of the various communities to concentrate in particular areas. It seemed to him to be fantastic and impossible. "We are not," he said, "inhabiting a country full of deserts and wastelands. We are a densely populated country and I do not see the slightest chance for such redistribution."

"In that respect the Lahore resolution is quite sound—where there is an obvious Muslim majority they should be allowed to constitute a separate State by themselves and that has been fully conceded in the Rajaji formula or my formula. There is not much distinction between them. That right is conceded without the slightest reservation. But if it means utterly independent sovereignty so that there is to be nothing in common between the two, I hold it is an impossible proposition. That means war to the knife. It is not a proposition that resolves itself into a voluntary or friendly solution.

"Therefore, the Rajaji formula and my formula have presented certain things to be in common between sovereign States. Therefore, there is no question of one party overbearing the other or the Centre having an overbearing Hindu majority. I think our formula should be critically and sympathetically examined and it would be found that the formula concedes everything that could reasonably be conceded if we consider ourselves to be one family. Children of the same family, dissatisfied with one another by reason of change of religion, if they should separate, then the separation should be within ourselves and not separation in the face of the whole world. When two brothers separate, they do not become enemies of one another in the eyes of the world. The world will still recognize them as brothers."

A journalist said that some of the Nationalist Muslims felt that the Congress through Mahatma Gandhi meeting Mr Jinnah had put them in a false position and that they might have to change their attitude towards Indian nationalism.

Mahatma Gandhi replied that it was an extraordinary suggestion. Nationalist Muslims were nationalists simply because they could not be otherwise. "I am a nationalist," he said, "not in order to please anybody, but because I cannot be otherwise. And if I approached the Qaid-i-Azam, I approached him in the common interests of myself and Nationalist Muslims and other Nationalists. Nationalist Muslims, so far as I know, were delighted when I approached the Qaid-i-Azam and were looking forward to a proper solution in the confidence that I would not sell the interests represented by them.

"Undoubtedly, a Nationalist Muslim represents the nation, but he represents the Muslims also, who are a part of the nation. He would be guilty of disloyalty, if he sacrifices the Muslim interests.

But my nationalism has taught me that I would be guilty of disloyalty, if I sacrifice the interests of a single Indian."

Asked if there was any difference between his present attitude towards the Muslim League demand and the stand he took in 1942, Mahatma Gandhi said: "There is very great difference. In 1942, Rajaji had not 'burst' on the scene as he did at the Aga Khan Palace with a concrete proposition. It reflects very great credit on his persistence. He never takes up a standpoint without the fullest consideration and having taken it up, he follows it to the bitterest end. He had abundant faith in my loyalty and he never gave me up as I have never given him up. When he found me in the Aga Khan Palace and presented the formula, I did not take even five minutes and I said 'Yes' because I saw it in a concrete shape.

"My mind is narrow. I have not read much literature. I have not seen much of the world. I have concentrated upon certain things in life and beyond that I have no other interest. Therefore, I could not realize the meaning of Rajaji's stand and I disliked it. But when he came with a concrete formula—I myself a concrete being of flesh and blood—and when he had put something in concrete shape, I felt I could hug it and touch it. Therefore, you see the vast difference between 1942 and today. However, thereby I have not departed from the Congress standpoint in general terms. Congress has accepted self-determination* and the Rajaji formula has also accepted the principle of self-determination and therefore the formula had become common ground."

Proceeding, Mahatma Gandhi explained that he accepted the principle of sovereign States, consistent with friendliness. "Friendliness suggests," he said, "that before the whole world we must act as one nation, not united by extraneous circumstances, or united by force of British arms, but united by a greater force, that is, our own determined will."

* See page 37.

INTERVIEW TO "NEWS-CHRONICLE"

GANDHIJI EXPLAINS WHY THE TALKS FAILED

The following is a record of an interview given by Gandhiji to Stuart Gelder of the "News Chronicle" on September 29, 1944, at Bombay:

Mr Gandhi told me today why his talks with Mr Jinnah failed to produce a solution of the Hindu-Muslim differences. "I could not accept the two nations basis. This was Mr Jinnah's demand. He wants immediate recognition of the North-West Frontier Province, Sind, the whole of the Punjab, Bengal and Assam as sovereign and completely independent Pakistan". He wants Mr Gandhi to agree to this amputation from the rest of India without consulting the wishes of the inhabitants by plebiscite. He has rejected the Rajagopalachari formula. I asked Mr Gandhi what he was prepared to recognise as Pakistan and on what basis there could be any hope of agreement in future. He was frank and precise. He replied, "I want to make it clear that I believe Mr Jinnah is sincere, but I think he is suffering from hallucination when he imagines that an unnatural division of India could bring either happiness or prosperity to the people concerned. It was my suggestion that provided there was the safeguard of a plebiscite there could be sovereignty for the predominantly Muslim areas, but it should be accompanied by bonds of alliance between Hindustan and Pakistan. There should be common policy and a working arrangement on foreign affairs, defence, communications and similar matters. This is manifestly vital to the welfare of both parts of India." This arrangement, Mr Gandhi said, could not interfere with the internal life of Muslims who would not be subject in any way to Hindu domination. Such a division would not create an artificial split between people who whatever their religious faiths are descended from a common stock and are all Indians. "Unfortunately", said Mr Gandhi, "Mr Jinnah would have none of it and asked me to agree to the principle of two nations entirely separate." I asked Mr Gandhi if he had adopted this attitude because he thought he could not 'sell' such a division to the country or because he thought it wrong in principle. He replied, "Because it is fundamentally wrong in principle. If I had thought Mr Jinnah's view was right even though the whole world were against me I would have accepted it personally and given him my unquestioned allegiance." I then asked Mr Gandhi, "If Mr Jinnah agreed to your view of division, but insisted there should be

no plebiscite or a plebiscite in which only Muslims would vote, would you settle on this basis?" Mr Gandhi answered, "Never. How could I agree in a personal or any other capacity to decide the future of millions of people without their having anything to say about their destiny?" "What", I asked "was your impression of Mr Jinnah's attitude on the question of an interim National Government which you outlined to me in July?" Mr Gandhi replied: "Mr Jinnah has said that he is deeply interested in Independence, but it did not seem to me that he set as great store by it as immediate recognition of the Pakistan he wants. Whereas, you see, my view has been all along that we cannot be free among ourselves until we are free from imperial domination. We have parted as friends. These days have not been wasted. I am convinced that Mr Jinnah is a good man. I hope we shall meet again. I am a man of prayer and I shall pray for understanding. In the meantime it is the duty of the public to digest the situation and bring the pressure of their opinion upon us."

MR JINNAH'S PRESS CONFERENCE

INSISTENCE ON TWO NATIONS THEORY

Mr M. A. Jinnah made the following statement at a Press conference held on October 4 at Bombay:

My attention has been drawn to Mr Gandhi's Press statement which was published on September 29. It is a pity that he thinks that the presence of a third party hinders a solution, and it was very painful to me when he said, "A mind enslaved cannot act as if it was free." No power can enslave the mind and soul of man, and I am sure Mr Gandhi is the last person to allow his mind to be enslaved. I do hope that he will get over this depression from which he is perpetually suffering. We have to reach an agreement of our own and find a solution in spite of that third party.

As regards the other matters, Mr Gandhi has unfortunately initiated his propaganda in right royal style, contrary to our joint statement. Apart from challenging the representative and authoritative status of the Muslim League, he is inciting Mussalmans against me, and he keeps on repeating the assertion throughout his statement that he has met the essence of the Lahore resolution by what he now calls his offer or offers in the shape of the Gandhi-Rajaji formula and his own proposal which he put forth at the eleventh hour. Any intelligent man can now see that in substance there is no difference between the two. What he calls his own offer came after he had rejected all the essentials of the Lahore resolution, and the Gandhi-Rajaji formula was shunted from the very commencement. Now that the matter is subject to public discussion, and as Mr Gandhi is making statement after statement and giving interviews which are so misleading, I am compelled to deal with what he calls his offer. Let us examine at least the main points:

1. Immediate grant of Independence to India as one single national unit.

2. Immediately setting up of a national provisional interim government of his conception, as defined by him in his letter of September 15, which is as follows: "A provisional interim government which will be responsible to the elected members of the present Assembly or a newly elected one. It will have all the powers less those of the Commander-in-Chief during the war, and full powers thereafter. It will be the authority to give effect to the agreement that may be arrived at between the Congress and the League." By the by, it does

not only recognise the existence of a third party, but hands over to him all the powers of the Commander-in-Chief during the war and Defence, which is the most vital and overpowering Department. This clearly means the establishment immediately of a Central unitary or Federal government in charge of the entire civil administration with an overwhelming majority of Hindus in the Legislature, which will be not less than 75 per cent., to which the Cabinet will be responsible.

3. That when such a government is established, it will be for this Government, so established, to frame the constitution of free India or it will set up an authority which will frame the constitution after the British power is withdrawn.

4. That this National Government will draft the treaty and agreements as regards the administration of matters of common interest as now made clear in what he calls his own offer, namely, in matters such as foreign affairs, defence, internal communications, customs, commerce and the like which he maintains must necessarily continue to be matters of common interest under an efficient and satisfactory administration of a Central authority or government. This can only mean that all these vital matters which constitute the lifeblood of a State will remain vested in the national federal government proposed by him, to which finally full powers and responsibility for the Government of India will be transferred. It is therefore clear that the National Government will be brought into full being, established, and well in the saddle according to these terms, with an overwhelming and solid majority of Hindus, which virtually would be a Hindu *raj.*

5. Then we are asked to agree to the most tortuous terms and accept the principle upon which areas are to be demarcated, namely district-wise, wherein the Muslim population is in absolute majority, which according to Mr Gandhi means that only that district will be recognized in which the Muslims have a majority of something like 75 per cent., for he says that by absolute majority he means as in Sind, Baluchistan or the North-West Frontier Province, but according to Mr Rajagopalachari, absolute majority means as understood in legal parlance. Apart from the fact that the joint authors already differ, I find from the dictionary that it means "a majority of all members of a body (including those voting and those not voting)."

6. That in areas thus demarcated, there will be promiscuous plebiscite on the basis of adult suffrage or other practicable franchise, and the form and the franchise will be decided again by the National Government referred to above, unless we can agree upon it beforehand.

It is when we have agreed to all these terms then alone comes the question of separation of those mutilated, broken areas again subject to further conditions: (1) This matter can only be considered after the

termination of the war, and (2) after the transfer of full power and responsibility for the Government of India to this National Government, and it will be then that this National Government will set up a Commission for demarcating contiguous districts as stated above, and complete its work of sheer vandalism, especially in the Punjab, Bengal, and Assam and then its findings will be given effect to by this National Government and if these poor areas so paralyzed desire to sever or separate from the all-India united, federal government, fully and firmly established, then they must submit to and go through a promiscuous plebiscite, and if the verdict is in favour of the Muslims, even then all matters of vital importance, such as foreign affairs, defence, internal communications, customs, commerce and the like shall remain vested in and continue to be administered by a Central authority or Government.

This is what Mr Gandhi calls a partition or division between two brothers, and it is really amazing that he should repeat *ad nauseam* that he has by his offer satisfied the essence or substance of the Lahore resolution. It would be difficult to conceive of a more disingenuous, tortuous and crooked assertion, which he keeps on repeating naively.

What is the use of misleading people and making confusion worse confounded if we accept these terms, which present us with a veritable trap and a slough of death? It means the burial of Pakistan. But I see some ray of hope still when he says, "If Rajaji and I have stultified the Lahore resolution, we should be educated."

I tried to do so, as far as Mr Gandhi was concerned, for three weeks, but his ailment is so long-standing and so chronic that it is beyond the reach of a physician.

I hope that his appeal to the Press and the public to educate him will not fall on deaf ears. But when he was asked, what next, he was pleased to say "I shall act as the inner voice tells." For an ordinary mortal like me there is no room in the presence of his "inner voice."

Mr Gandhi may sincerely believe that he has complied with the essentials of the Lahore resolution by his own offer or by the Gandhi-Rajaji formula, but it is pure imagination and delusion. The language and the terms of both, as clarified by Mr Gandhi, show that they are like the Siamese Twins, and it is impossible to maintain that either of them satisfies any of the essentials embodied in the Lahore resolution.

His contradictions and inconsistencies even in a single letter, however short, are beyond measure, and the sum total of all that has happened during the past four weeks, presents one with a Chinese puzzle. I will give one instance, amongst many:

"Where there is an obvious Muslim majority, they should have the fullest right to constitute themselves into a separate State. But

if it means utterly independent sovereignty so that there is nothing in common between the two, I hold that it is an impossible proposition. Then it means a fight to the knife."

Here is an apostle and a devotee of non-violence threatening us with a fight to the knife, and according to him the talks have only adjourned *sine die*. But apart from that, what kind of separate State does he then concede to the obvious Muslim majority in their national homelands?

Mr Gandhi, perhaps under provocation, again asserted that he had never admitted the claim of the Muslim League as the only authoritative organization of the Mussalmans, and darkly hinted that there are other Muslim organizations with a large body of Muslim opinion behind them who do not see eye to eye with the League and do not support the two-nations theory. Thereby he has again made an attempt to discredit the Muslim League and disrupt the Mussalmans, for he knows that is not true. Of course, no nation can attain absolute and complete unanimity cent. per cent.

In one breath Mr Gandhi agrees to the principle of division, and in the next he makes proposals which go to destroy the very foundations on which the division is claimed by Muslim India. On the one hand he wants a League-Congress agreement, and on the other he denies its representative character and authority to speak on behalf of the Mussalmans of India. Mr Gandhi is an enigma.

Mr Jinnah then elucidated a number of questions put by Pressmen regarding the boundary of the Pakistan State. He was asked if any machinery will be set up to decide the case of predominantly non-Muslim border areas, as to whether they intended to join Pakistan or Hindustan. Mr Jinnah referred the questioner to the Lahore resolution which stated that the division should be on the basis of the present boundaries of the six provinces, namely the N.-W.F.P., the Punjab, Sind, Bengal, Assam and Baluchistan subject to territorial adjustments that might be necessary.

He emphasised the words "subject to" and explained that territorial adjustments did not apply to one side only but to both sides, Hindustan and Pakistan.

"I made it clear," Mr Jinnah said, "that if we agree on the fundamentals of the Lahore resolution then the question of demarcating or defining the boundaries can be taken up later in the same way as a question of boundaries arising between two nations," and solved. It will be like one Government negotiating with another to arrive at a settlement.

"But there are no Governments here", interrupted a reporter.

Mr Jinnah said that the two bodies would set up constitution-making bodies which would deal with the matter or even before that they might arrive at an agreement.

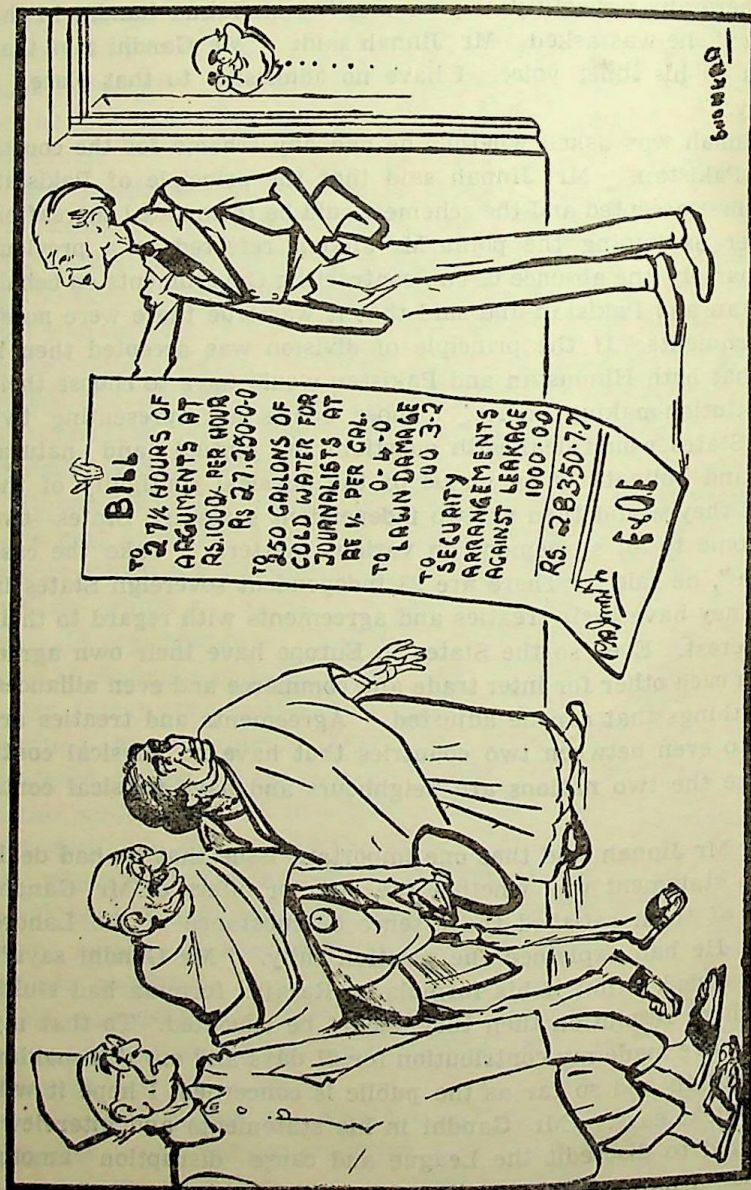
"Is there any possibility of your meeting Mahatma Gandhi in the near future", he was asked. Mr Jinnah said: "Mr Gandhi says that it depends on his inner voice. I have no admission to that place. I cannot say."

Mr Jinnah was asked whether he had any scheme for the constitution of Pakistan. Mr Jinnah said that the principle of Pakistan should be first accepted and the scheme would be formulated thereafter.

Further explaining the point Mr Jinnah referred to a previous question, namely, the absence of two contracting Governments on behalf of Hindustan and Pakistan and said that it was true there were no *de jure* Governments. If the principle of division was accepted then it followed that both Hindustan and Pakistan would have to choose their own constitution-making bodies. Those bodies as representing two sovereign States would deal with questions of mutual and natural relations, and obligations by virtue of the physical contiguity of the States and they would then as two independent sovereign States—two nations—come to an agreement on various matters. "Take the case of America", he said. "There are 23 independent sovereign States in America. They have their treaties and agreements with regard to their mutual interest. Even so the States in Europe have their own agreements with each other for inter-trade and commerce and even alliances. These are things that can be adjusted. Agreements and treaties are entered into even between two countries that have no physical contiguity. Here the two nations are neighbours and have physical contiguity."

Earlier Mr Jinnah said that one important issue that he had dealt with in his statement was whether the offer or offers of Mr Gandhi had either of them satisfied the essence or substance of the Lahore resolution. He had explained the position fully. "Mr Gandhi says", Mr Jinnah added, "that if his formula or Rajaji's formula had stultified the Lahore resolution then they should be educated. To that my answer is I have made my contribution for 21 days and am still making that contribution and so far as the public is concerned, I hope it will not fall on deaf ears. Mr Gandhi in his statements and interviews has attempted to discredit the League and cause disruption among Mussalmans. I naturally resent it and he will get his answer."

BUSINESS IS BUSINESS

Hindustan Times, 5-10-1944.

[A purse of over Rs. 11 million, which was collected by voluntary subscriptions all over the country, was presented to Mahatma Gandhi on his birthday on October 2, to be utilized in memory of his late wife, Shrimati Kasturba Gandhi, for the welfare and education of women and children in rural India. The presentation was made by Mrs Sarojini Naidu. To the right of Mahatma Gandhi is Mr A. V. Thakkar, the Secretary of the Memorial Fund.]

A RETROSPECT

BY "RIGHTANGLE"

GENESIS

Apart from the vital political importance of a meeting between Mahatma Gandhi and Mr Jinnah after so many years, the Indian Press had looked forward to the Mount Pleasant negotiations for their transcendent news value.

Ever since the publication of Mahatma Gandhi's letter to the League leader of July 17 and the latter's reply a week later every one in India and especially the Press had been anxiously waiting for the announcement of the beginning of the meeting. When Mr Jinnah arrived in Bombay on August 8, political speculators no less than the weighty folk who discuss all issues in trains and other public places figuratively speaking licked their chops in pleasant anticipation. On all hands it was assumed that the prospect of settlement was brighter than ever before. Mahatma Gandhi was in one of his "down-right concession" moods. He was out to break the deadlock, cost what it may. That was how the average Congressman out of jail but completely inactive, explained it to himself; and as for Mr Jinnah the wish-thinker was certain that even he must realize after the Punjab *contretemps* that negativity cannot be a permanent attitude in politics. The political wiseacre who would import the personal factor into discussions of public affairs, was certain that Mr Jinnah had perforce, for the purpose of maintaining his "position," to show greater accommodation. And Mr Jinnah in truth being one of those politicians with whom the personal factor is almost everything, such an argument seemed eminently realistic. Moreover had not Mr Jinnah in his reply to Gandhiji's first letter evinced a meekness surprising in one whose usual response to every approach from the Congress side hitherto had been a porcupine-like bristle? On August 5, still in the Punjab, Mr Jinnah had publicly called Gandhiji, "Mahatma" and said "Bury the past" in an extraordinary statement in which he appealed for a period of political truce: "It has been the universal desire that we should meet. Now that we are going to meet, help us. We are coming to grips. Bury the past."

All this suggested a new chapter in Indian politics and the Press and public waited for August 19, the date on which the two leaders were to meet, with bated breath. The truce demanded so sentimentally by Mr Jinnah was maintained in letter and spirit by the largest section of the Press and the public, though inevitably there were bound to be such

people like Minister Khuhro from Sind who came all the way to Bombay to do untimely propaganda for Pakistan.

But the meeting did not after all take place on August 19, for Mr Jinnah fell ill. Its postponement cast a gloom over the country. Would the talks take place after all? Had not the Viceroy said that a Gandhi-Jinnah agreement would only be regarded as a preface to an imperial chase of the "elements," those newly defined political molecules whose strength and utility only Lord Wavell knew? What advantage could Mr Jinnah see in an agreement with Mahatma Gandhi whose direct action movement had failed and who had stuck firmly to the August resolution? These doubts, taken along with the increasing volume of anti-Pakistan sentiment voiced in Bengal, Punjab and even in Madras by the valiant Srinivasa Sastri, caused quite a number of people to give up hope of the meeting taking place. It was taken for granted that another one of Britain's carefully prepared political time-bombs had done its devastating work and there would be no Mount Pleasant of communal unity.

It was when public expectations were at the lowest level that Mr Jinnah published his telegram to Gandhiji informing him of his recovery and readiness to receive him, and Mahatma Gandhi's plan to proceed to Bombay on September 8 was announced. Hopes again rocketed high.

In spite of Gandhiji's invitation of August 31 to all "individuals and organizations" in the country to "devote themselves to silently praying that we may both be wisely guided by the Almighty" and his warning "against all kinds of demonstrations," the Khaksars announced a programme of "salutes" and similar activities, which, though they came to nothing in the end, made newspaper headlines. At the other end, the brave Mr Thatte sprang into prominence by creating the All-India Anti-Pakistan Front and picketing Mahatma Gandhi's hut in Sevagram. Master Tara Singh asked the Sikhs to put their faith in the Khalsa and observe the Anti-Pakistan Day on September 3, and Sir Chimanlal Setalvad, whose *modus operandi* has always been the collectivised statement, embarked on securing a list of signatures meant to confound both Mr Jinnah and Mahatma Gandhi. Mr Aney contented himself with complaining that people all about him were "talking of the most vital and fundamental matters in extremely vague and indefinite language."

PREPARATIONS

India in general and Bombay in particular set about preparing for the "Conversations," "Talks," "Parleys" or "Negotiations," as they were called, earnestly from September 5. About three thousand

Khaksars who had mysteriously come to Bombay began to move about the city to create the "proper" atmosphere. Bombay Communists began to hold meetings with the firm conviction that agreement between comrades in Matunga and Parel would compel both Gandhiji and Mr Jinnah to resort to the path of united action. The Sikhs propounded the theory of Sikhistan, a self-determining State in the Punjab, "formed on a property basis, not a population basis," whatever that proviso may mean.

The Government too made their preparations. Whether it was to protect Mr Jinnah from the Khaksars or Mahatma Gandhi from enraged Hindus is not clear; but the Police Commissioner of Bombay issued on September 7 an order "prohibiting for a period of seven days from September 9 the use of a certain number of roads and public places except by those persons who are resident in the locality surrounding those roads and by persons who genuinely need to visit those persons." This order was discussed by the Bombay Corporation when the strange sight of Mr S. K. Patil, leader of the Congress Party, defending, because of peculiar circumstances, an order under D.I.R. was witnessed. The order was later amended to permit people to attend prayers presided over by Gandhiji even though Press representatives till the end of the conversations had to carry pieces of blue paste-board on which was typed the *verboten* that one could not enter Mr Jinnah's compound without express permission by his Secretary, an unassuming gentleman with a Goanese-sounding name. Mr Jinnah himself substantiated the police order by issuing a statement to the effect that "Press representatives, I hope, will understand that obviously the meeting is not open to the Press and therefore I would request them not to take the trouble of coming to my house....Photographers and film companies are at liberty to take photos and shots on the arrival of Mr Gandhi." From this unapproachable position the Qaid-i-Azam did generously resile, permitting the gentlemen and ladies of the Indian and foreign Press to squat about on his lawns and on one particular rainy day, even to seek shelter on his marble-paved verandah. But while the edict lasted, it filled the Fourth Estate alternately with amusement and fury.

On September 8 Mahatma Gandhi left Sevagram for Bombay, Mr Thatte and eight others being arrested for indulging in demonstrations. One of the demonstrators was found to be in possession of a dagger which one must believe, for it was so explained, was meant to serve as protection against Khaksars and not as a weapon against Gandhiji —the Vivisector.

In Bombay on that day pervaded "a feeling of subdued optimism" according to The *Times of India* which sapiently wondered whether the

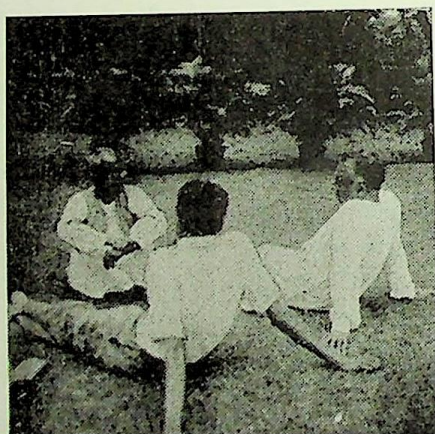
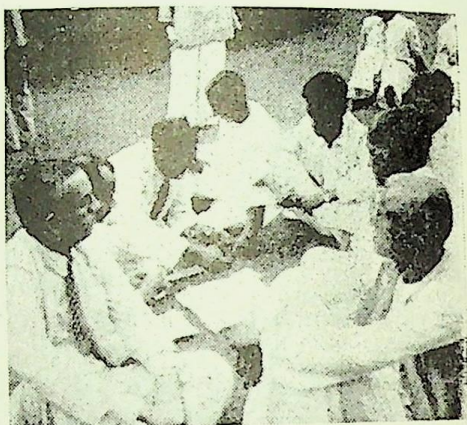
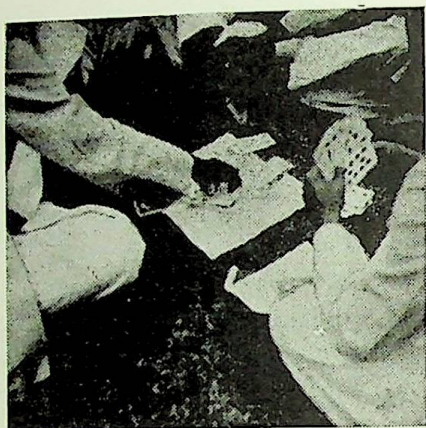
leaders when they met would "discuss geographical division" and all that went with it. This feeling of subdued optimism survived that part of the leading article written by the London *Times* and wired out by *Reuter* so as to appear opportunely, which said categorically that "no agreement between Mr Gandhi and Mr Jinnah however satisfactory to their adherents can materially advance political progress in India unless it takes into account wider interests . . . . the anxiety of the depressed classes . . . . the claims of the Princes . . . ."

Of course, it did not matter to *The Times* or to the Government of India that about the same time that this leading article was being written, Mahatma Gandhi had been assuring a group of students from Bengal that "he would not ignore or compromise a single interest."

Mahatma Gandhi arrived in Bombay according to programme; the police began guarding Malabar Hill and Congress volunteers, under the dynamic Mr Patil, Birla House.

OPTIMISM

On September 9, two years and a month after the passing of the Quit India resolution by the A.-I.C.C. in Bombay, and exactly one month after Mr Jinnah's arrival in Bombay, Mahatma Gandhi repaired to No. 10, Mount Pleasant Road, reaching there, according to the local Press, at 3-57 p.m. The welcome he received from Mr Jinnah and his sister lacked no warmth. The ceremony of shaking hands which ended in a hearty embrace, obviously uncomfortable to the fastidious host, was punctuated by "I am glad to see you, Gandhi!" and "I am glad to meet you, Jinnah!". From 3-57 to 7 p.m. they could be just seen talking, through a conveniently situated French window. The Press, wondering below, did not then know that Gandhiji was discovering for himself, once again, that "an ocean separated him and Mr Jinnah in outlook." Nor did Pressmen gather that Mr Jinnah had lost no time in emphasising his favourite legalism regarding Gandhiji's "non-representative" status. All that became clear only when the correspondence was published. On that day the Press left Malabar Hill with the feeling that agreement between the two was not impossible. No one attached any special importance to Mahatma Gandhi's cryptic reply that he had brought "only flowers" from Mr Jinnah's house, when he was asked by a stock humourist: "Have you brought anything?" On Sunday, September 10, the two did not meet, for it was, according to Mr Jinnah, "the twenty-first day of Ramzan, a very important day for all Muslims." On that day, while Mahatma Gandhi granted interviews to friends, Mr Jinnah, correctly constitutional, met Mr I. I. Chundrigar and members of the Provincial Muslim League. Mr Jinnah on that day also wrote his first letter of the series to Mahatma Gandhi

THE PRESS

demanding "clarification" of a hundred things. The next day the two met again at five o'clock in the evening after Mahatma Gandhi had completed his 24 hours of silence. The papers that morning had said that there was "a feeling of optimism both in Congress and League circles." And as if to underline the optimism Mr Jinnah unbent sufficiently to the Fourth Estate to provide them with carpets to sit on. The papers also carried the news that the British Institute of Public Opinion after a poll had found that the majority of Englishmen "would like to see the British Government reopening negotiations with Indian leaders." Further there was the assurance given by Gandhiji at the end of his prayer meeting that both he and Mr Jinnah would, "if we parted without coming to an agreement," regard themselves as having proclaimed, in Mr Jinnah's words, "bankruptcy of wisdom on our part.." There was reason for Gandhiji to feel optimistic for, on that day he had in a very persuasive letter tried to point out to Mr Jinnah that the C.R. formula contained the substance of the Lahore resolution of the League. He had also tried to get over "his non-representative character" by pledging all his influence over the Congress for the ratification of any agreement reached between them. On September 12, the two met both in the morning and the evening, talking altogether for over four hours. The Pressmen who at that time at least knew nothing definitely about what was being talked, came to the conclusion that "the talks would be prolonged." It had come to be known by then that practically every day letters were being exchanged between the two leaders. On September 13 the Press shrewdly guessed "that a crucial stage had been reached in the talks." Today we know that it really was the crucial day. For on that day, it appears from the correspondence, Mr Jinnah decided to drag both the conversations and the correspondence into fields of purely academic controversy. But to the Pressmen who looked at the leaders on that day this was not very clear. Indeed Mahatma Gandhi when he stepped out of Mr Jinnah's house told the Press: "Yesterday you read something in our faces. Here we are both. I would like you not to read anything in our faces except hope and nothing but hope."

This behest seemed necessary to Gandhiji because some Bombay papers had already begun reading meanings into the prolonged nature of the conversations and prophesying that the talks could not end in anything but failure. A local paper which had been carrying on a *jehad* against Mahatma Gandhi ever since the publication of the C.R. formula and the Gelder interview, announced categorically that morning that the talks would fail. When such pessimistic forecasts were pointed out to the two leaders on the 13th, Mr Jinnah treated them with indifference and said, "why bother?"

Mahatma Gandhi replied: "You do not know they have written so much. Have you read the papers? You do not know what people bent on mischief will do."

Turning again to the journalists Gandhiji said: "All of you know both of us. You should leave both of us alone, or if you can read our hearts and faces, you should submit what you write, to one of us to enable us to say so if it were so. You should be silent if you want to serve India and humanity." The words came from Gandhiji's heart. He had perhaps an inkling that there was deliberate purpose in the method of legalistic obstructionism that the Qaid-i-Azam seemed to be unconsciously developing. But, being a man of prayer as he called himself, he was hopeful. But it was the last day of hope anyway.

Was there something more than coincidence in the fact that it was on the crucial thirteenth of September when the Indian leaders began to know in their heart of hearts that agreement would not immediately be possible, that Messrs Churchill and Roosevelt discussed India in Quebec and *Reuter* announced that "these informal conferences may do much to decide the shape and structure of the post-war world and presumably India's future and the vexed question of her Independence will not be ignored."

PESSIMISM

On Thursday, September 14, Sir Azizul Haque, a Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council, met Mr Jinnah. Rumours were also current that Sir Sultan Ahmed had sought an interview with the Qaid-i-Azam but that it had been refused. Those who felt like giving an explanation said that Sir Azizul Haque had rendered unto the Qaid-i-Azam what was the Qaid-i-Azam's recently in a speech, whereas Sir Sultan Ahmed had never publicly conformed to Pakistanism.

On September 14 the papers carried the report of a speech by Sir Henry Richardson, leader of the European group in the Central Assembly, in which that gentleman speaking with the proprietory air that comes so naturally to non-official Europeans in this country had said that any agreement between Mahatma Gandhi and Mr Jinnah must be "definite and complete." There should be no vagueness, no leaving over of issues to constitution-making bodies and similar contrivances. Here again the strange hand of coincidence or more than coincidence can be noticed; for some of the papers announced that the leaders were discussing details, and today we know from perusing the correspondence that it was in his letter of the 14th that Mahatma Gandhi specifically mentioned the vital need for "ousting the Third Party" before anything could be done. The day before Mr Jinnah without committing himself at all had insisted on elaborate

clarification of the nature and functions of the provisional interim government. The number of definitions that Mahatma Gandhi had been compelled to give could have satisfied even Sir Henry Richardson. But they did not satisfy Mr Jinnah.

The next day's papers carried an interview given to the American Press by Sir Stafford Cripps in which it was stated "a new Constitution Act for India is a difficult and complicated matter which cannot be undertaken in war time. Any temporary arrangement for participation by Indian parties in the Government must be under the existing constitution." Whether that reminder of Imperial fixity of purpose had any immediate effect on the negotiators is not known.

Outwardly everything was just the same on Friday, September 15. Mahatmaji came. Mr Jinnah received him and they went up after the Qaid-i-Azam had cleverly used the Press to carry his thanks *gratis* to all people who had been giving advice, suggestions and good wishes. They came out, Mr Jinnah wearing his wry smile, and Mahatmaji left—a routine which was repeated almost boringly throughout the negotiations. To those who were constantly present at these arrivals and departures many subtle changes were becoming apparent. Mr Jinnah's smile was becoming every day more forced; Mahatmaji's looks when he came in were every day growing more serious. Mr Jinnah had given up the habit of coming out to the verandah to receive his guest. He was contenting himself with standing in the hall and receiving him. On Saturday, September 16, there was no meeting. The Press unhappily speculated without even the looks of the leaders to base its speculations on. On Sunday they met again after Gandhiji had earlier in the day received Mr Jinnah's letter in which he had sought to give the former certain lessons in political letter-writing. Mr Jinnah had wanted definitions and clarifications regarding the provisional interim government. Gandhiji had tried to define and clarify. Mr Jinnah in reply stated that they were no clarifications. He was insisting on the non-representative character of Gandhiji with greater vehemence than ever before.

On Sunday the prayer meeting was very big and the enthusiasm of the crowd brought on itself strictures from Gandhiji who said that prayer was something where people need not shout. There was again no meeting on Monday, September 18, as Gandhiji was observing silence.

On Tuesday was published Mr Jinnah's Id message which by its total silence regarding the talks and its air of belligerence seemed to belie the hope that Mahatmaji still seemed to be holding on to. Gandhiji that day said after prayers that "you can rest assured that we are not talking without hope; the day I feel that

there is no more hope, I will not hesitate to say so." But those who knew Mr Jinnah and had read his statements and proclamations certainly had no grounds for holding on to hope after reading his Id message. There was in it no sign of the spirit of accommodation so noticeable in his speech in Lahore on August 5, when he wanted to "bury the past." The Id message reflected nothing but that obstructive intransigence which has become the most obvious aspect of Mr Jinnah's political personality.

Said the Qaid-i-Azam: "Since my last Id message to you, our progress as a nation has been steady and solid. We have moved from strength to strength, and today, I am happy to say, I find the Muslims of India united as one man, ready for any sacrifice for the advancement of our national cause. We have now set our hand to practical nation-building work, such as social, educational and economic, and especially the industrial reconstruction of the homelands comprising Pakistan. We have had to deal with some renegades of the *millat* who were blocking our progress in the very heart of our land. I am glad that the Muslims now realize their responsibilities, and they have clearly shown by their verdict in the recent by-election at Multan that they cannot be easily deceived. We stand as one solid nation today."

The reference to the advance of Muslims as a nation was in reply probably to Gandhiji who that day had written to Mr Jinnah that they two must "agree to differ on the two nations theory, and solve the problem on the basis of self-determination." If there was to be separation, Gandhiji had said, then "that grave step should be specifically placed before and approved by the people of those areas." The most important of those areas was the Punjab. Did the Punjabis want separation? Mr Jinnah was uncomfortable whenever that question was asked. So in the Id message he resorted to abuse of the "renegades of the *millat.*" It was a strange Id message indeed, in which not a word of hope for the people could be found, but which mentioned the Multan by-election as a keypoint of Pakistani salvation.

There was no meeting on Wednesday on account of Id which was celebrated in Bombay with more amiability between the communities than had been possible for many years. Congress leaders attended the Id meeting along with leaders of the League and Mr Bhulabhai Desai and Mr C. Rajagopalachari spoke. Mr Desai propounded the Congress case and said that there was no need in the modern world for people to be known by their religions. He stressed the vital need for mutual understanding and unity for the attainment of the country's freedom. Rajaji who was received with every show of affection by

the Muslim crowd, thanked them from his heart. He said he could not talk on the Gandhi-Jinnah negotiations, though that was nearest his and their heart. He closed his speech with the warning "when it is over, you will hear me shouting and disturbing the peace all over India." Even Mr Chundriger, the President of the Provincial Muslim League, did not insist on the two nations theory being accepted immediately with any vehemence. Instead, he said that "the eyes of every Hindu and every Muslim were fixed on Mr Gandhi and Mr Jinnah who were trying to achieve communal unity so as to be able to wrest power from the British. He prayed for the success of their efforts." The meeting showed more clearly than ever before that the Muslim masses were tired of the position taken up by Mr Jinnah and that the C.R. formula which Mr Jinnah had rejected was not without appeal to them in spite of Malabar Hill's contempt for it.

BREAKDOWN

From the beginning of the conversations to September 14 was the period of optimism as far as the Press and the public were concerned. From September 14 to Id was the period of pessimism. Thursday September 21, the day after Id, initiated the third period in the negotiations, the period of breakdown. The conversations that day lasted ten minutes more than usual. Gandhiji announced his decision to be in Sevagram by October 2 and the police extended the ban on visitors to Malabar Hill up to September 30, with truly creditable prescience.

It was on Thursday that Mr Jinnah had written the most provocative and probably the most obstructive letter of the series to Mahatma Gandhi. In it he made it clear that self-determination was not enough. What he meant by Pakistan was an irrevocable carving out of a new State which would have no relation with the rest of India even in such fields of administration as defence. If the object was to insult, the letter could not have been improved upon.

Correspondence between Mr Jinnah and Mr E. V. Ramaswamy Naicker which was released to the Press that day, however, showed that though Mr Jinnah was all for a completely independent Pakistan, "homelands of the Indian Muslims", he did not have a very soft corner in his heart for others who demanded wholesale separation. Replying to "Periyar", the title assumed by this Qaid-i-Azam of the South, Mr Jinnah had written: "I have always had much sympathy for the people of Madras, 90 per cent. of whom are Non-Brahmins, and if they desire to establish their Dravidistan, it is entirely for your people to decide on this matter. I can say no more, and certainly I cannot speak on your behalf. I have made the position clear to you and your colleagues

when I was in Madras more than once, but hitherto I have noticed that in your activities you have been undecisive. If the people of your province really desire Dravidistan then it is for them to assert themselves. I hope that you will understand my position, that I can only speak for Muslim India, but you have my assurance that wherever and whenever I have a say in the matter, you will find me supporting any just and fair claim or demand of any section of the people of India, and particularly the Non-Brahmins of Southern India."

On Friday, September 22, they met again. Before Gandhiji came for the talks, Mr Jinnah had been visited by Sir Torrick Amir Ali as well as by Mr Chundrigar accompanied by members of the Bombay Provincial Muslim League Committee. To the latter Mr Jinnah had said that the talks were proceeding and "there was no reason to think that they were not getting on well. If they had not been getting on, the conversations would have broken down." He asked his visitors to pray to God for the success of the talks. Considering that Mr Jinnah had taken up the attitude evident in his letter of the previous day, his trust in God seemed to be literally boundless. Gandhiji in his letter written to Mr Jinnah that day had said that "they were moving in a circle" and suggested the calling in of a third party or parties to guide or arbitrate between them. If Mr Jinnah really wanted guidance this suggestion may have appealed to him. But by then, he probably had come to the decision that he would do nothing but move in circles of complaint and criticism round Gandhiji. It was about the talk they had on this day that Gandhiji later said in his letter, that it had left "a bad taste in his mouth." He also mentioned that "the breaking point" had been reached on that day.

On Saturday and Sunday the talks continued as usual. When the leaders came out on Sunday, Pressmen asked Mr Jinnah whether in view of the reports appearing in some newspapers they could expect a statement. Mr Jinnah replied that they were again meeting on Tuesday and added: "I have told you so many times that I cannot say anything more than what I have said. You must not go on asking me questions. On his attention being drawn to certain assertions in the independent Gujarati daily *Janmabhoomi*, Mr Jinnah said: "I am telling you what I can tell you." Asked whether no serious notice need be taken about the assertions of that paper, Mr Jinnah said: "You are again asking questions. That is unfair." The fact was that the *Janmabhoomi* had published a categorical report which stated that the talks had conclusively broken down. It claimed accurate knowledge of the subjects discussed by the leaders and prophesied that no agreement would be reached. Later developments proved

that the paper was correct and was in possession of copies of the correspondence that was passing at that time between Mahatma Gandhi and Mr Jinnah.

The letter that passed between the leaders on Saturday and Sunday (second week) made their relations to each other more strained. Mr Jinnah in his letters had rejected Gandhiji's arbitration proposal, questioned with more than usual ill nature Gandhiji's representative capacity and embarked on a vehement attack on the 8th August resolution of the Congress. In Mr Jinnah's opinion, this resolution was aimed not so much at wresting power from Britain, as confounding the Muslim League. When such untenable arguments began to be used by Mr Jinnah, it must have been clear to Mahatma Gandhi that the Qaid-i-Azam had totally resiled from his "bury the past" stand, and reverted to his usual methods. Perhaps it was because he realized this that he wrote his letter of the 24th in which he made a new offer which granted the right of separation to the Muslims after the achievement of freedom, provided there would be a common authority to direct activities such as foreign affairs, defence, internal communications etc., to the advantage of both. Mahatma Gandhi put the proposal in specific terms. In reply he got Mr Jinnah's letter of the 25th, which rejected the proposal as it was opposed to the Lahore resolution. September 25 was a Monday and there was no meeting on that day. While observing silence Gandhiji wrote to Mr Jinnah suggesting that he should be given an opportunity to put his case before the League Council or the open session of the League. This of course was brushed aside by the League President in his reply next day.

On Tuesday, September 26, when Pressmen as usual assembled in Mr Jinnah's lawns, there was a feeling among them that it would be the last day of the conversations, and that they would that day hear the announcement of failure. But it did not happen. At the end of the conversations that day Mr Jinnah announced that they would meet again the next day. On September 26, the leaders exchanged the final letters. The next day, the *Lokmanya* and the *Janmabhoomi* carried in their morning editions translations of all the letters that had passed between the leaders up to the previous evening. So the Pressmen who assembled at Mr Jinnah's house on Wednesday knew that the only purpose of the meeting that day was to decide as to how the correspondence should be released to the Press. As expected, at the end of that day's talk Mr Jinnah handed to the Press copies of the correspondence as well as a short statement by him.

With regard to the premature publication of the correspondence in one section of the Press, there are any number of suppositions. Mahatma Gandhi has expressed his belief that leakage could not have

taken place from his secretariat. Mr Jinnah reading a meaning into this has angrily asserted that his own secretariat is above suspicion. Among many solutions offered for this riddle was the following one, which should have been investigated: "On Saturday last a local journalist, who is alleged to own allegiance both to an Indian news agency and the Bombay C.I.D., called at *Blitz* office, told RKK that the Bombay talks had failed totally, and offered to sell *Blitz* the entire Gandhi-Jinnah correspondence, confidential minutes of the talks, etc. The deal was made for a thousand rupees; it broke down later over political and ethical issues. RKK wanted to purchase the papers exclusively and solely for *Blitz* reserving for himself the option of withholding them from publication should he consider them harmful to national interests. . . ." There lay the snag. The political and communal powers behind the so-called newspaper scoop desired at all cost and sacrifice that the confidential correspondence be made public property. So *Blitz* lost the deal. The press-cum-C.I.D. reporter took his file elsewhere. The rest is known to the public."

Thus, not with a bang but with a whimper did the Mount Pleasant talks come to an end. Millions of Indians had looked forward to it as an "open sesame" to a new chapter in the relationship between the communities in India. All men with commonsense will agree that everything the Indian Muslims wanted or ever hoped for had been conceded. But the intransigence of one man was able to thwart the hopes and gainsay the commonsense of all the millions. The Congress certainly is disappointed in the outcome of the talks, but for the Muslims there is a lesson in it which they should ponder. The position taken up by Mr Jinnah is this: The Muslims of India should be granted the status of a separate nation, in their present condition of slavery; they will not in their existence as a separate nation have any friendly administrative relations with their neighbours, even though without such relations existence as a State may be impossible for Pakistan. Is this position accepted by all the Muslims of India or even by the Muslim League? Mr Jinnah's final letter to Gandhiji almost suggests that he is aware of the fact that he cannot find much support for his attitude even in his own organization. Else there is no reason to show nervousness regarding possible "threats and consequences" and express forebodings about being "pilloried."

APPENDICES

CORRESPONDENCE BEFORE THE TALKS

GANDHIJI'S EFFORTS FROM DETENTION

The following letter written by Gandhiji to Mr Jinnah on May 4, 1943, from detention was withheld by the Government. It was released for publication on May 18, 1944, by Mr Pyarelal, Gandhiji's Private Secretary:

DETENTION CAMP, May 4, 1943.

DEAR QAID-I-AZAM,

When sometime after my incarceration Government asked me for a list of newspapers I would like to have, I included *Dawn* in my list. I have been receiving it with more or less regularity. Whenever it comes to me I read it carefully. I have followed the proceedings of the League as reported in the *Dawn* columns. I noted your invitation to me to write to you. Hence this letter.

I welcome your invitation. I suggest our meeting face to face rather than talking through correspondence. But I am in your hands.

I hope that this letter will be sent to you and if you agree to my proposal, the Government will let you visit me.

One thing I had better mention. There seems to be an "if" about your invitation. Do you say I should write only if I have changed my heart? God alone knows men's hearts.

I would like you to take me as I am.

Why should not both you and I approach the great question of communal unity as men determined on finding a common solution and work together to make our solution acceptable to all who are concerned with it or interested in it?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI.

GOVERNMENT STOPS GANDHIJI'S LETTER

The following Press communiqué was issued by the Government of India, on May 26, 1943, announcing their decision not to forward Mahatma Gandhi's letter to Mr Jinnah written from the Aga Khan Palace Detention Camp:

The Government of India have received a request from Mr Gandhi to forward a short letter from himself to Mr Jinnah expressing a wish to meet him. In accordance with their known policy in regard to correspondence or interviews with Mr Gandhi, the Government of India have decided that this letter cannot be forwarded and have so informed

Mr Gandhi and Mr Jinnah. They are not prepared to give facilities for political correspondence or contact to a person detained for promoting an illegal mass movement which he has not disavowed and thus gravely embarrassing India's war effort at a critical time. It rests with Mr Gandhi to satisfy the Government of India that he can safely be allowed once more to participate in the public affairs of the country, and until he does so the disabilities from which he suffers are of his own choice.

HOW MR JINNAH INVITED LETTER FROM GANDHIJI

The following is the relevant passage which occurred in Mr Jinnah's speech at the annual session of the Muslim League at Delhi, in April 1943, as then reported in the Press, inviting Mahatma Gandhi to write to him and challenging the Government to stop such a communication from Gandhiji:

Nobody would welcome it more than myself if Mr Gandhi were now really willing to come to a setttlement with the Muslim League. Let me tell you that it will be the greatest day both for Hindus and Muslims. If that is Mr Gandhi's desire, what is there to prevent him from writing direct to me? Who is there that can prevent him from doing so? What is the use of going to the Viceroy? Strong as this Government may be in this country, I cannot believe that they would have the daring to stop such a letter if it were sent to me. It would be a very serious thing indeed if such a letter were stopped. . . . Mr Gandhi gets all the information and knows what is going on. If there is any change of heart in his party, he has only to drop a few lines to me. Then the Muslim League will not fail, whatever may have been our controversies before.

ANOTHER VERSION OF MR JINNAH'S CHALLENGE

The following version of the League speech of Mr Jinnah was circulated by the 'Associated Press of India' when the Government of India stopped Mahatma Gandhi's letter to him:

Nobody would welcome it more than myself if Mr Gandhi is even now really willing to come to a settlement with the Muslim League on the basis of Pakistan. Let me tell you that it will be the greatest day both for the Hindus and Muslims. If he has made up his mind, what is there to prevent Mr Gandhi from writing direct to me? He is writing letters to the Viceroy. Why does he not write to me direct? What is the use of going to the Viceroy and leading deputations and carrying on correspondence? Who is to prevent Mr Gandhi today? I cannot believe for a single moment—strong as this Government may be in this country—you may say anything you like against this Government—I

cannot believe that they will have the daring to stop such a letter if it is sent to me. It will be a very serious thing indeed if such a thing is done by the Government. But I do not see evidence of any kind of change of policy on the part of Mr Gandhi or Congress or the Hindu leadership.

MR JINNAH'S REACTION TO STOPPAGE OF LETTER

The following statement was issued by Mr Jinnah on the Government 'communiqué' announcing the stoppage of Mahatma Gandhi's letter to him:

This letter of Mr Gandhi can only be construed as a move on his part to embroil the Muslim League to come into clash with the British Government solely for the purpose of helping his release, so that he would be free to do what he pleases thereafter. There is really no change of policy on the part of Mr Gandhi and no genuine desire to meet the suggestion that I made in my speech during the session of the All-India Muslim League at Delhi. Although I have always been ready and willing to meet Mr Gandhi or any other Hindu leader and shall be still glad to meet him, yet merely expressing his desire to meet me is not the kind of ephemeral letter that I suggested in my speech that Mr Gandhi should write, and which has been now stopped by the Government. I have received a communication from the Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department, dated May 24, that Mr Gandhi's letter merely expresses a wish to meet me and this letter Government have decided cannot be forwarded to me.

My speech was directed to meet the appeals that were made to me, and are now being made by Hindu leaders, that the Muslim League should do something towards the solution of the deadlock, and my suggestions about the kind of letter that Mr Gandhi should write, were in response to those appeals, when I said that I myself saw no change of heart. There was no evidence of any change of policy on the part of Mr Gandhi or Hindu leadership and I referred to the recent correspondence that had passed between Mr Gandhi and the Viceroy which on the contrary showed that Mr Gandhi fully maintained his stand of August 8, 1942.

But, nevertheless, some of the responsible Hindu leaders pressed upon me that Mr Gandhi had now realized that he had made a mistake and that he would be prepared to reconsider and retrace his step if he were given an opportunity to do so and that he had changed his attitude towards Pakistan and would be willing to come to a settlement on the basis of Pakistan, but the British Government were preventing the Hindu-Muslim settlement by refusing people of position and standing to establish contact with him for this purpose. I, therefore,

suggested that if Mr Gandhi were to write to me a letter indicating that he was prepared to retrace his steps and abandon his policy and programme culminating in the resolution of the A.-I.C.C. of August 8, and was even now willing to come to a settlement with the Muslim League on the basis of Pakistan, we were willing to bury the past and forget it. I still believe that the Government will not dare to stop such a letter if it came from Mr Gandhi.

I regret that the Congress Press, as usual, is indulging in cheap gibes and slogans based on the publication of isolated passages from my speech and even those are mutilated and important words are eliminated from them. This may serve as misleading and inimical propaganda, but is not calculated to create a friendly atmosphere which is essential. In my opinion the Press and those who are indulging in various thoughtless statements are doing a great disservice.

RAJAGOPALACHARI-JINNAH CORRESPONDENCE

MR. JINNAH'S FIRST REACTIONS TO C. R. FORMULA

The following correspondence between Mr Rajagopalachari and Mr Jinnah was released by the former for publication from Panchgani on 8th July:

NEW DELHI, April 8, 1944.

DEAR MR JINNAH,

Here is the basis for a settlement which I discussed with Gandhiji in March 1943, and of which he expressed full approval. He then authorized me to signify his approval of these terms should I be able to convince you of their being just and fair to all. As the Government have refused to relax any of the restrictions imposed on him to enable him to discuss or negotiate terms of any settlement, I write this to you on his behalf and hope that this will bring about a final settlement of the most unfortunate impasse we are in. You are aware of the intensity of my desire for a settlement. I was very glad when I found it possible to obtain Gandhiji's approval of these terms. I hope that you will bestow your fullest thought on the justice and fairness of these proposals and help to terminate a condition of affairs which is steadily causing all-round deterioration in the country.

Yours sincerely,
C. RAJAGOPALACHARI.

Enclosure: C. R. Formula.

MR RAJAGOPALACHARI'S SECOND LETTER

NEW DELHI, April 17, 1944.

DEAR MR JINNAH,

The proposal I gave you in writing when we last met in Delhi must be still with you and perhaps you have read it over again and given further thought to it. I was much disappointed, as you are aware, at your inability to approve of the terms. But I hope you may perhaps reconsider your position. I sincerely believe that the proposals form a fair and satisfactory basis of settlement. I shall be grateful to hear from you as to whether you have reconsidered the matter.

Yours sincerely,
C. RAJAGOPALACHARI.

TELEGRAM FROM MR RAJAGOPALACHARI TO MR JINNAH

POONA, June 30, 1944.

QAID-I-AZAM JINNAH, Guest House, Srinagar.

My letter dated April 17, touching matter personally discussed on

April 8 remains yet unanswered. Have now met Gandhiji who still holds by formula presented to you by me. I would like now publish the formula and your rejection. This telegram is sent with Gandhiji's approval. I would like you at this juncture to reconsider your rejection.

C. RAJAGOPALACHARI.
Dilkusha, Panchgani.

TELEGRAM FROM MR JINNAH TO MR RAJAGOPALACHARI

Srinagar, July 2, 1944.

MR RAJAGOPALACHARI, Dilkusha, Panchgani.

Your request to publish your formula. Your wrong version our talk that I rejected your formula is unfair surprising. True facts are I was willing place your formula before Working Committee Muslim League although it was not open to any modification but you did not agree allow me to do so. Hence no further step was taken. My reaction was that I could not personally take responsibility of accepting or rejecting it and my position remains same today. If Mr Gandhi even now sends me direct his proposal I am willing place it before Muslim League Working Committee.

M. A. JINNAH.

TELEGRAM FROM MR RAJAGOPALACHARI TO MR JINNAH

Panchgani, July 4, 1944.

QAID-I-AZAM JINNAH, Guest House, Srinagar.

Thanks telegram. My letter April 17 showed how I felt over what I thought was rejection of formula so far as you were personally concerned. Shall be glad indeed if as your telegram suggests you did not reject it. Gandhiji, though not vested with representative or special authority in this matter definitely approved my proposal and authorized me to approach you on that basis. Now again he reaffirms his assent. Weight of his opinion would most probably secure Congress acceptance. You were unwilling to accept my formula, but were willing to place it before League Council. I think no purpose served by such procedure so long as it does not have your own support.

C. RAJAGOPALACHARI.
Dilkusha, Panchgani.

TELEGRAM FROM MR JINNAH TO MR RAJAGOPALACHARI

SRINAGAR, July 5, 1944.

(Received Panchgani, July 8, 1944).

MR RAJAGOPALACHARI, Dilkusha, Panchgani.

Regret unable to go beyond my telegram July 2.

M. A. JINNAH.

TELEGRAM FROM MR RAJAGOPALACHARI TO MR JINNAH

PANCHGANI, July 8, 1944.

MR JINNAH, Guest House, Srinagar.

Your telegram of 5th received today. With it private negotiation ends. It is necessary take public into confidence now. I am accordingly releasing entire correspondence ending your wire 5th.

C. RAJAGOPALACHARI.

GANDHIJI SUGGESTS AN INTERVIEW

LETTER IN GUJARATI TO MR JINNAH

Mr Jinnah addressing the Council of the All-India Muslim League at Lahore on July 30 disclosed the letter which he had received from Gandhiji inviting a personal discussion and his reply. The following is an English rendering of Mahatma Gandhi's letter to Mr Jinnah in Gujarati dated 17th July, 1944. (Gandhiji had also appended an Urdu translation to the original Gujarati):

DILKUSHA (Panchgani), July 17, 1944.

BROTHER JINNAH,

There was a time when I was able to induce you to speak in the mother tongue. Today I venture to write to you in the mother tongue. I have already suggested a meeting between you and me in my invitation issued from jail. I have not yet written to you since my release. Today I am impelled to do so. Let us meet whenever you wish. Do not regard me as an enemy of Islam or of Indian Muslims. I have always been a servant and friend to you and to mankind. Do not disappoint me.

Your brother,
M. K. GANDHI.

MR JINNAH'S REPLY

H.B. "Queen Elizabeth,"
SRINAGAR (Kashmir), July 24, 1944.

DEAR MR GANDHI,

I received your letter dated July 17 here on July 22 and I thank you for it.

I shall be glad to receive you at my house in Bombay on my return, which will probably be about the middle of August. By that time I hope that you will have recuperated your health fully and will be returning to Bombay. I would like to say nothing more till we meet.

I am very pleased to read in the Press that you are making very good progress, and I hope that you will soon be all right.

Yours sincerely
M. A. JINNAH.

MR RAJAGOPALACHARI ANSWERS CRITICS

NO MENTAL RESERVATION

The following statement was issued by Mr C. Rajagopalachari to the Press on July 16, 1944, *from Panchgani:*

It is gratifying to note that apart from the Mahasabha's uncompromising attitude, Gandhiji's acceptance of my scheme has been widely welcomed. The opposition of the Hindu Mahasabha leaders to any Congress-League settlement on the basis of self-determination for predominantly Muslim areas is nothing surprising or new. The Mahasabha's opposition must be taken for granted. It cannot be met by any terms acceptable to the Muslim League.

If we accept the argument of the Mahasabha the result will be undoubtedly the continuance of the deadlock and of British rule for all time. The real question is whether a dependent status and authoritarian rule from Delhi and Whitehall are better than a settlement under the scheme proposed. If the League and the Congress agree to this or to any other scheme, not even the Imperialism of the British Tories can successfully resist the Indian demand for Independence.

Unless we talks in terms of civil war and violence, powerful units though numerically inferior cannot be held against their will in a Confederation or for that matter in a Federation.

No procedural points need stand in the way of a just estimate on the merits of the scheme which is now before the entire Indian public. The issue is too important for a controversy on procedure to be allowed, to deflect attention from the main point. It is difficult to appreciate the steps I have taken unless there is some sympathetic imagination. I have used my utmost capacity and patience towards settlement by private negotiation. It is now two years since I started the work. Even though I had secured Gandhiji's unqualified personal support to the scheme, and it conceded all that the Muslim League had ever demanded in its resolution of 1940 or could hope to claim before the bar of world opinion, I found Mr Jinnah unwilling to give his personal support to it. What could I do thereafter by way of private negotiation and with whom was I to do it? I beseeched Mr Jinnah to give more thought to it. The terms of my letter of April 17, 1942, are now before the public. No reply was received to this letter, although three months had passed. It was no small thing that I had offered. Mr Jinnah had before him the maximum that the Congress or nationalist India could agree to. And what is more, I offered it with Gandhiji's powerful moral support. It would have been enough if on

his part Mr Jinnah had approved it and, like Gandhiji gave it his moral support and made his commitment subject to the Muslim League Working Committee's approval. If the matter is to be officially considered by the Working Committee of the League without support from Mr Jinnah, there is no room for private negotiation and it is obviously the wisest course to bring public discussion to bear on the question and let the League Working Committee consider it in the light of public opinion. Without Mr Jinnah's personal support, placing it before the League Working Committee and disposing of it without reference to the public would have been unfair to the public and hardly done justice to the scheme.

It has been stated by some that I have mental reservations in making this offer to the League. This is an unfair aspersion. What earthly gain can accrue to me out of my mental reservations when terms clear as crystal have to be accepted or rejected by two public organizations? The suspicion is childish.

If the phrase mental reservation is applied to describe the doubts entertained by the critics as to the results of a plebiscite, it is a misleading use of the term. I had never any mental reservations and have none now. I am in dead earnest.

The right to be separate from the outset or to secede at any time later or to reconfederate under conditions agreed to by both sides has to be conceded. It does not mean that I myself desire separation. But I wish to make the people of the Muslim areas feel that they are free to make their choice. To call this a mental reservation is an abuse of words.

Some persons have even gone to the length of suggesting that Gandhiji's approval was not freely given or that it has been given without full thought. This is a suggestion beneath contempt.

World tendencies are towards integration rather than subdivision, and the wisdom of uniting into big States and larger units and thereby gaining strength is increasingly patent. But these points should be put before the people to consider at the plebiscite. This has been provided in the scheme. To put them forward now as arguments for denying the very right of self-determination is to perpetuate distrust and as a result maintain the Hindu-Muslim deadlock and British domination over India. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru has seen the point. I am afraid that Sir Chimanlal Setalvad and Sir Vithal Chandavarkar have not. United India can no doubt, as they say, pull her weight in international affairs, but not a disunited India under British domination with nothing but a map to show her boundaries.

It is strange that Dr Ambedkar should have remarked in his

statement that we have a plot to buy up Muslim votes at the plebiscite. I cannot find words to describe the falsehood of this charge. The Muslim League is quite able to take care of its Muslim voters in a matter in which they are so keenly interested.

Some critics find fault with Gandhiji for having given his approval without consulting the Working Committee of the Congress. It should be remembered that Gandhiji has given his personal approval and not on behalf of the Congress, however great may be the moral weight of that approval. The scheme put forward may not be in accordance with the communal position taken up by the Mahasabha, but it is perfectly consistent with the Congress position as it has been repeatedly set out.

C. R. FORMULA NOT LAPSED

In an interview at Madras on July 19 on the breaking off of his personal negotiations with Mr Jinnah, Mr C. Rajagopalachari said:

"My personal negotiations have come to an end giving place to public discussion. A Congress-League settlement is still possible and if public opinion brings sufficient pressure to bear on the League and if there is a desire for ending the Hindu-Muslim deadlock and for emancipating the people of India from a status of subjection, a settlement is not only possible but even probable."

To a question: "Will not your offer be exploited to the disadvantage of the Hindu community without a settlement being made?" Rajaji said: "This question arises out of the fact that the nature of the problem has not been clearly understood. The offer we have made is not for any change in the administrative arrangements under British rule. Had this been the case, Mr Jinnah could, with the assistance of the British Government, exploit our offer. What the League had asked for is independent sovereign status for a certain tract of the country wherein the Muslims are in a majority in contiguous areas. It is this we have offered to the Muslim League. If it does not ripen into a settlement, we shall remain where we are. If British control continues and our status is one of subjection, there is no question of partition. United we shall stand in subjection. All divisions can then only be provincial divisions. Our proposals cannot be exploited for any purpose detrimental to the interest of the country. You put this question because, in the past, offers in respect of questions like separate electorates, separation of provinces and the like were exploited. There was then no question of freedom from British control and this kind of exploitation was possible."

"Do you mean to say that if there is no settlement as to the constitutional question and no Hindu-Muslim agreement, the readjustment

of boundaries involved in your present offer would be an improvement on the existing state of affairs?" was the next question.

Mr Rajagopalachari replied: "I think so. At present, the provincial governments in Bengal and the Punjab are autonomous in the subjects that fall within the provincial field. The Central government, even if it should become National, has no appellate or revisional authority whatsoever in these matters. Most people who object to self-determination imagine that the Central government has appellate authority over the provinces. This is not correct. All the departments of government which have relation to the progress and daily life of the people, including law and order, are in the autonomous control of the provincial government. After this war-time period is over and elections are held, I leave it to the Hindu Mahasabhaites to guess what kind of ministries will be in power in the Punjab and Bengal under separate electorates with Muslim majorities. A better adjustment of boundaries would prevent friction and discontent and make for a stable provincial government. This has nothing to do, however, with Pakistan. I am only answering doubts as to possible exploitation."

THE QUESTION OF SOLVENCY

Interviewed in regard to an editorial in the *Dawn* in which it was remarked that "the next step will be the marking of the frontiers of Pakistan with due regard to its safety and solvency", Mr. C. Rajagopalachari said:

"I am loth to enter into a controversy at this stage in anticipation of the impending meeting between Gandhiji and Mr Jinnah, but seeing that the official organ of the League has put forward this claim, I must emphatically deny the interpretation sought to be put on the formula.

"The Muslim League's demand for the constitution of the Muslim majority areas into a separate sovereign State is based on the supposed wishes of the people of those areas. The formula is a concession to the persistent demand of the League. If it is now thought by the *Dawn* that the conditions for an independent State are lacking in those majority areas, it is good ground for advising the people at the time of the plebiscite to vote against separation or for withdrawing the demand altogether. It cannot become a reason for asking for an extension of territory involving the coercion of people outside the Muslim majority areas, or for making other and fresh demands. The idea of separation was conceived by the Muslim League and the demand persisted in against the protest and advice of others. Areas found to be lacking in self-sufficiency must be content to remain units within a larger State and cannot aspire to independent sovereign status."

GANDHIJI'S STATEMENTS ON C. R. FORMULA

WILLING TO MEET MR JINNAH

Consequent upon the publication of the Rajagopalachari-Jinnah correspondence Gandhiji made several public statements regarding the C. R. formula and referred his willingness to see Mr Jinnah to discuss the formula.

The following replies by Gandhiji were given to questions addressed by the London office of the 'United Press of India,' at Panchgani on July 15, 1944:

1. *Question:* Will you kindly explain the exact difference between the Cripps Plan and your own as revealed in the Gelder interview?

Answer: My plan contemplates an immediate recognition of full independence for India as a whole, subject to limitations for the duration of the war to meet the requirements of the Allied operations. The Cripps Plan, as I understood it, dealt more with the future than with the immediate arrangements. Moreover, in my opinion the Cripps Plan meant dismemberment of India, the Indian States being set up as an all-extensive disintegrating factor. But if my plan is considered by British statesmen to be not very different from the Cripps Plan, it should be all the easier for them to accept it.

2. *Question:* What if Mr Jinnah sticks to a plebiscite of Muslims only in the districts or provinces where the Muslims are in majority?

Answer: Neither Qaid-i-Azam Jinnah nor the Muslim League have pronounced their opinion on Rajaji's formula. I would deprecate anticipating them. Rajaji is with me. We have agreed for the sake of conserving my limited energy that he should deal with the questions arising from the formula. For my part I would appeal to the questioners, foreign or Indian, not to forestall the Muslim League.

3. *Question:* How do you propose to fix the ratio of the League and Congress in the National Government?

Answer: I must not be drawn into details. If the indication of my mind affords any satisfaction to the authorities, they should open the gates of the prison and let those who can speak with authority pronounce upon my proposal or at least let me confer with them. As it is, I do not know that I have not embarrassed them by my sharing my personal opinion with the public before first sharing it with them. The publication is premature and not of my seeking.

4. *Question:* Will you meet Mr Jinnah personally?

Answer: The question arises from ignorance of facts. I am always willing to meet Qaid-i-Azam Jinnah.

5. *Question:* What are your views on the Bombay Plan? Do you think crises like the one which overtook Bengal could be permanently avoided by acceptance of such a plan?

Answer: The Bombay Plan is a post-war plan. Anyway, the question should be addressed to the authors.

CONTRIBUTION OF TWO LIFE SERVANTS

The following Press interview was given by Gandhiji at Panchgani, on July 30, 1944:

Mahatma Gandhi in an interview to the Press emphasized that the British Government's rejection of his offer did not affect in any way the formula for a communal settlement. Asked when he expected to meet Mr Jinnah, he said: "I expect to meet the Qaid-i-Azam as soon as he wants me, of course, health permitting. The publication of the formula is in pursuance of negotiations for a communal settlement. It is not an idle effort. It is conceived in all sincerity. It is unfortunate that the criticism that has been levelled against it, so far as I can see, has been conceived out of prejudice or careless study of the formula. Nor is it an offer on the part of any party. It is a contribution from two life servants of the nation towards the solution of the communal tangle which has hitherto defied solution. It is an open invitation to all parties to apply their minds to the solution. The Rajaji formula is intended as a help to all lovers of the country. It is the best we could conceive, but it is open to amendment as it is open to rejection or acceptance. In a way the rejection of my offer for the resolution of the political deadlock enables all parties to concentrate their attention on a communal settlement. Whilst I have said and repeat that the presence of a third party effectively prevents the solution, it was never meant to convey that I would make no attempt at an honourable solution even while the third party continued to dominate this land of ours. No one will be more pleased than I if we can pull through to a solution which satisfies all parties.

To a reporter who asked if Gandhiji would advocate Congressmen going back to jail in view of British Government's rejection of his proposals, Mahatma Gandhi said: "It shows that even you Pressmen do not know the technique of Civil Disobedience. Have you ever known any sane person without any cause going to jail or after discharge going back to jail? But a person who holds his self-respect or his country's liberty dearer than life itself invites suffering even unto death in defending either. In that process if jail comes his way he welcomes it. Your question therefore should really be addressed to the Government: 'When do you propose to take back to jail those whom you have released?' But I know that Government are not going to oblige you by answering your question."

GANDHIJI WELCOMES CRITICISM

The following account of an interview with Gandhiji at Sevagram was issued to the Press, on August 6, 1944, by Dr Syama Prasad Mookerjee:

I had a long interview with Mahatmaji yesterday in my individual capacity and fully explained why I and those who think like me are so strongly opposing Mr Rajagopalachari's formula from the point of view of India as a whole. The discussion was full and frank. It is not necessary for me to publish at this stage the different points of view expressed. But there was clarification on some main principles which the public should know. They are, among others, as follows:

Gandhiji says that his association with the Rajaji formula is personal and is meant to commit nobody but himself. He is, therefore, anxious that people should express their opinion freely and fearlessly. I gathered from our conversation that he welcomes such criticism for he was open to conviction. If he discovered any flaw in the formula he would have no hesitation in correcting the error. In his opinion the formula is intended to be just to all. If therefore any community was likely to be unjustly affected by the formula being given effect to, the flaw should be brought to his notice. He was also anxious that people should remember that if an agreement was reached between Qaid-i-Azam Jinnah and himself it would be open to all parties to advocate their points of view before the plebiscite is held and the plan would come into effect only in case of transfer by Britain of full power and responsibility in the governance of India. There was therefore ample time for a calm and dispassionate discussion. He also said that the Rajaji formula was a way of reducing to a concrete form the Congress resolution on self-determination and nothing could operate without the consent of all sections. This is not the gist of the whole conversation. That part of it only is given which is necessary to ease the public mind of the fear that any criticism of the formula would weaken Gandhiji's influence or position. He assured me that he had always welcomed criticism and that he had flourished on it and that his influence could not be weakened by it. This is being published with Gandhiji's approval.

FLAWS TO BE CORRECTED

The following is an account of an interview Gandhiji gave to the 'United Press of India' at Sevagram, on August 7, 1944:

1. *Question:* You said in Panchgani: "All my recent declarations are quite consistent with all my previous declarations on the communal problem." But in the past you had said: "Partition means a

patent untruth. . . My whole soul rebels against the idea . . . to assent to such a doctrine is for me denial of God." (*Harijan*, April 14, 1940). "The partition proposal has altered the face of the Hindu-Muslim problem. I have called it an untruth. There can be no compromise with it. . . It cannot come by honourable agreement." (*Harijan*, May 4, 1940). "I consider vivisection of India to be a sin . . . " (May 24, 1942). Would you kindly enlighten me how they are consistent? The Mahasabhites seem to argue in the above style and hence clarification is sought.

Answer: Though I would avoid answering all questions on the subject before the forthcoming meeting between Qaid-i-Azam and me, I must not postpone answering yours. I know my present attitude has puzzled and pained many people. I have not revised the opinion quoted by you. At the same time that I made the statement you refer to I was also a party to the self-determination resolution of the A.-I.C.C. I hold that the Rajaji formula gives effect to that resolution. I would nowever urge critics not to mind my inconsistencies, so-called or real. Let them examine the question on merits and bless the effort if they can.

2. *Question:* · What is your reaction to Mr Jinnah's speech? If Mr Jinnah does not accept your proposal or your talks with him end in failure, will you withdraw your support to Rajaji's proposals or will the proposals stand?

Answer: I do not believe in dying before my death. I do not approach the forthcoming visit with the expectation of failure. I always hope for the best and prepare for the worst. I would therefore ask you not to anticipate failure. Ask me when the failure stares you and me in the face.

3. *Question:* What have you got to say to the Sikhs who have expressed apprehension in the All-Party Sikh Conference at Lahore that you will further surrender to the Muslim League?

Answer: My Sikh friends are unnecessarily perturbed. I can settle nothing for anybody but myself. The Congress resolution is a sacred trust and I have no doubt that it will be discharged fully. Brave people are never frightened by bogeys. Let the Sikh friends examine the proposal on merits. And if they find an evident flaw in it, I shall correct it and so, I am sure, will the Qaid-i-Azam if he is satisfied that there is a flaw.

THE CONJURER'S BASKET

The following statement was issued by Gandhiji on August 18, 1944, upon the publication of the correspondence between him and the Viceroy. It also dealt with his expected talks with Mr Jinnah:*

The published correspondence shows that I left no stone unturned to conform to the Viceregal requirement. The final Government reply

* See page 95.

is positive proof that the British Government have no intention to win public support. I do not confine myself to the Congress since its main demand has been backed by almost all political parties. So far as the technical winning of the war is concerned they have evidently no need of such support. Moral support they seem to despise. Boiled down, the Viceroy's proposition means that unless all the main parties agree as to the constitution of the future and there is agreement between the British Government and the main parties there is to be no change in the constitutional position and the Government of India is to be carried on as at present. The names of parties given in the Government reply are illustrative only. I have no doubt that on due occasion more will be exhibited as from a conjurer's basket. And who knows how and when the British Government will agree to surrender control. It is as clear as crystal that the British Government do not propose to give up the power they possess over the four hundred millions unless the latter develop strength enough to wrest it from them. I shall never lose hope that India will do so by purely moral means. The problem of food meanwhile remains unsolved. Only a National Government envisaged by me can provide a genuine solution. Any other will be a mirage. It is most unfortunate that at this critical juncture the Qaid-i-Azam has fallen ill and under medical advice he cannot see me till he is free from his illness. A proper heart agreement between us can induce a revision even of the firm refusal of the British Government as conveyed through his Excellency's letter. Let us all pray that the Qaid-i-Azam may be soon restored enough to see me and that God will so dominate our hearts as to lead us to a right solution. I would like to assure all parties to be affected by our solution that we will not come to any terms which might compromise or ignore a single interest. The Rajaji formula is capable of being amended if it is found to contain flaws as many Hindu and Sikh friends have suggested it does. No solution is likely to last unless it is on the face of it right and is acceptable to the people of India as a whole.

MR JINNAH'S SPEECH AT LAHORE

The following is the text of the relevant portion of Mr Jinnah's speech addressing the council of the Muslim League on July 30 at Lahore:

Mr Rajagopalachari's formula is a parody of negation and intended to torpedo the Muslim League's resolution of March 1940 and when he says that his formula concedes all that the Muslim League had ever demanded by its resolution, it is the grossest travesty. First of all where does he find any mention of plebiscite in that resolution and especially plebiscite districtwise?

But let me take clause by clause some of the important points of Mr C. Rajagopalachari's formula. First take the preamble basis of the terms which if accepted will completely bind the Muslim League whereas the Mahatma may withdraw his blessings as he is not speaking according to Mr C. Rajagopalachari with the authority of the Congress or in his representative capacity whatever that may mean. Then we come to the first clause: " subject to terms set out below as regards the constitution." I do not see "the constitution" in this formula. Which constitution does he refer to? Then comes the demand for independence. It implies that we are against the independence of the peoples of India and both Mr Gandhi and Mr C. Rajagopalachari know that it is an uncalled for insinuation to make.

Next comes the condition that we will cooperate with the Congress in the formation of a provisional interim government for the transition period thereby arrogating to the Congress a dominant and superior position and requiring our cooperation as a subordinate body with this leading organization. As to the kind of provisional interim government for the transitional period that is to be formed, no indication is given as to its form, character, personnel, its powers etc.

After the termination of the war, a commission shall be appointed for demarcating contiguous districts in the north-west and east of India and a plebiscite of all the inhabitants would be held districtwise where the Muslim population is in absolute majority. It is not stated who will appoint this commission, what will be its personnel and its powers and who will enforce its findings. Really how can Mr C. Rajagopalachari stand unabashed and make the public statement that his formula concedes all that the Muslim League's resolution of March 1940 demanded.

It would be open to all parties to advocate their point of view before the plebiscite is held although this agreement is intended to be only between the Congress and the League. Next, in the event of separation, mutual agreements shall be entered into for safeguarding defence, commerce and communications and for other essential purposes. The question arises, safeguarding these matters from whom and what does it mean. These mutual agreements are made obligatory and it is not very easy to understand the significance of this clause.

Then comes the last clause which is the height of ingenuity. These terms shall be binding only in the case of transfer by the British of full power and responsibility for the Government of India. But it does not say to whom. According to the latest statement by Mr Gandhi, the August resolution is " absolutely innocuous ", that while his authority has lapsed the August resolution has not lapsed. Let it

now collapse, for Mussalmans do not regard it as innocuous, as both the demand and the sanction for it to force this demand are inimical to the Muslim ideal and demands.

Let Mr Gandhi join hands with the Muslim League on the basis of Pakistan in plain and unequivocal language and we shall be nearer independence for the peoples of India which is so dear to the heart of not only Mr Gandhi, but of the millions in this country. Mr Gandhi and Mr C. Rajagopalachari are putting the cart before the horse when they say that all these clauses can have any value or can become effective only if Great Britain transfers powers to India. There is no chance of it unless Hindus and Muslims unite and by means of united front bring it out from the unwilling hands of the rulers of Great Britain.

THE PROPER APPROACH

The following survey of the background of the talks by the Special Representative of the "Hindustan Times" appeared in the issue of September 10, 1944:

For the first time India is looking to its own leaders for salvation. Think of the days when our politicians and thinkers talked in terms of Lord Morley and Mr Montague being friends of India; recall the interest created by the Muddiman Reforms Committee, the Simon Commission and the Round Table Conferences; think of the expectations raised by Lord Reading and Lord Irwin and consider the hopes centred in Lord Linlithgow. They were the days when Indians looked up to the British rulers, whether for increasing association with the Government, or for grant of Provincial Autonomy, or for attainment of Dominion Status. The Nehru Committee, of which Mr Jinnah was a member, was the first attempt to think independently of the British. That report was an answer to a challenge by Lord Birkenhead. It went a long way towards putting India on her feet, but it failed because the Muslim community was split into two. Then the Aga Khan and Sir Fazli Hussain stood for separate electorates and for the creation of four Muslim provinces against the Hindus' six whereas Mr Jinnah's group favoured joint electorates with reservation of seats. There was such distrust of Mr Jinnah at the time that the late Sir Fazli Hussain took special precaution to see that Mr Jinnah did not assume the role of a spokesman of the Muslim community at the first Round Table Conference. In fact, Mr Jinnah was isolated to such an extent that he was left out of the succeeding Conferences and faded out of the picture.

Mr Jinnah's re-entry into Indian politics in 1935 after the new reforms was based on a grievance that whereas the toady group among Muslims had captured the seats of authority in the "Muslim" provinces the League Muslims in the "Hindu" provinces had been left out in the cold. What suddenly pushed the League into prominence was the conflict between the Congress and the British Government over the issue of the war aims and their application to India. The totalitarian concept which had captured the world's imagination did the rest. If other countries could be personified by Hitler, Mussolini, Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin why not Indian communities? The Muslim intelligentsia was fascinated by the idea of having a Qaid-i-Azam—their answer to a 'Mahatma.' So also some Hindus thought of a 'Vir.'

The result was that the support which the British gave tacitly to the Muslim League made Pakistan a live issue. The Cripps proposals and the C. R. formula have recognized that a territory could break away from

the union. Communal talks failed in the past because the Muslim League demands for separate electorates and reservation in public services went against the conception of common nationality and were vicious in principle. Muslims recognized that the safeguards they required were "vicious in principle" but wanted them until Muslim backwardness was removed. Thus every time an effort was made for a settlement the parties attempted to limit the 'evil,' and disagreed on where to draw the line. It was indeed akin to an industry's demand for a temporary tariff shelter with a solemn assurance that the protective walls could go after a certain period.

The turn which the Muslim League took towards Pakistan would never have occurred had there been no World War. The British authorities wishing to take the wind out of the Congress sails applauded the League and banked on Mr Jinnah's temperament to do the rest.

Another background to the Bombay meeting is the all-round political disillusionment. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru's good wishes to the two leaders stand out in contrast to the 'challenge' thrown by the Setalvad group. Sir Tej Bahadur represents the moderates and liberals who had faith in constitutional methods for winning responsible government. He realizes that their method has failed. The Congress struggle has revolutionized the Indian political scene but Swaraj is not yet within grasp. The Muslim League now finds that Pakistan will not come as a gift from London just as the Congress discovered twenty years ago that independence would not come by merely asking for it.

Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, Gandhiji and Mr Jinnah have thus suffered complete disillusionment at the hands of the British and recognize that India's freedom, in whatever shape, must come by the effort of Indians themselves and that power will have to be wrested from alien hands.

I believe, therefore, that both Gandhiji and Mr Jinnah have now the proper psychological approach to the problem they have met to solve in Bombay. Their main concern will be how best to unite their forces to wrest power from the British. And they will determine what in their view would be the shape of a free India.

In their mental make-up the two leaders are fundamentally different, but both are equally shrewd. Gandhiji's non-violent approach to everything makes him realize that a union of hearts cannot be achieved by force. Mr Jinnah knows that religious sentiment and communal emotion do not by themselves provide a permanent foundation for a sound social structure. He has to think of a plan which must be practical. Both leaders realize that they owe responsibility to the country as a whole. Gandhiji's conception of India is the Congress conception. He cannot afford to ignore any limb of the body politic because he realizes that if a finger is cut the whole body will react to

it. Neither can forget that Indian States are a part of the Indian polity.

In short, the two leaders have to decide what should be the picture of India in the future. It is they, and not Churchill, Amery, Cripps and Wavell, who will determine our political edifice. So far as Gandhiji is concerned he has probably turned his face finally from the British. Mr Jinnah has now felt that the British have turned their face from him. No wonder the two turned their faces towards each other and found themselves in each other's embrace at their first meeting after five years, and began with a 3-hour "frank and friendly" talk.

Organizationally, the League stands where the Congress stood 22 years ago; it will have to undergo great suffering in order to be able to fight its own battles. But if the solid foundation for freedom laid by the Congress is utilized by the League leader, he will save his followers a generation of blood and tears.

The success of the Bombay talks thus hangs entirely on Mr Jinnah's attitude. How reflective is his mind and how constructive his thoughts, it is not easy to assess. For three decades Mr Jinnah was an arm-chair politician. The past five years have made him a leader of the people. That transformation has wrought changes. The general impression is that he has become more egotistic, arrogant and irreconcilable than ever. But he has now seen the masses. Who knows that beneath that arrogant exterior there may be a heart beating fast at the thought of misery born of slavery? Mr Jinnah cannot but feel the weight of years and the impending tragedy should the talks fail.

Think of the amazing change that would come over the Indian scene if it were said that Gandhiji and Mr Jinnah had found a basis of agreement and that they proposed jointly to convert other interests to their view or modify their proposals in the light of new facts. India would raise her head high among the nations of the world. Indians dispensing justice and laying the foundation of their own freedom! Englishmen watching the scene!! World applauding the deed!!!

AN IMPOSSIBLE CLAIM

The following leading article on the breakdown of the talks appeared in the issue of the "Hindustan Times" dated September 30, 1944:

The expected has happened and hopes temporarily raised have been shattered. Notwithstanding every symptom and reason pointing to the contrary, people of all classes in the country, Muslims even more than the others, were fervently praying for the announcement of a settlement between the Qaid-i-Azam and the Mahatma. Though the nature of the Muslim League's demand was such that it presented insurmountable obstacles in the way of acceptance, people throughout India worked themselves up to expecting a miracle and believed that somehow the great personalities engaged in the conversations would produce an agreement. Mr Jinnah's statement, referred to by Gandhiji at a prayer meeting a few days after the talks had begun, that they would be proclaiming their bankruptcy of wisdom if they parted without an agreement, reinforced popular expectation. The country has now to reconcile itself to the hard reality that no agreement can be reached as long as Mr Jinnah sticks obstinately to his new and fanciful interpretation of the Lahore resolution of the Muslim League. Statesmen have to plan anew for satisfying the just demands of the Muslims.

It is an obviously untenable position for Mr Jinnah to take up, as he has done in more than one of his letters, that any phase of the discussion between him and Gandhiji could be barred or prevented from being proceeded with on account of Gandhiji not being clothed with representative authority. The specious nature of the plea is only too obvious. It is strange that the leader of the Muslim League should have thought fit to press into service such an unconvincing objection instead of seizing and making the best of a great opportunity for serving his community. If Mr Jinnah felt that he could deal only with a "fully accredited representative" and not with Gandhiji who was only an "individual" representing "no one but himself," what, we ask, was the point of his profession of anxiety not to "proclaim bankruptcy of wisdom by failing to reach an agreement"? Again, Mr Jinnah must remember that the Muslim League Working Committee dealt with the C. R. formula at their meeting on July 30 last and authorized Mr Jinnah to "conduct negotiations with Mahatma Gandhi." It was well known to all concerned that the Congress organization was not then in a position to initiate or authorize anyone to carry on negotiations. On the other hand, the League's authority to Mr Jinnah to negotiate with

Gandhiji must be taken in the light of a direction and it was not open to Mr Jinnah to raise the offensive objection of want of authority so far as the Mahatma was concerned. Gandhiji has stated the position in clear and modest terms in his letter of September 26: "Your constant references to my not being clothed with representative authority are really irrelevant. I have approached you so that if you and I can agree upon a common course of action I may use what influence I possess for its acceptance by the Congress and the country. If you break, it cannot be because I have no representative capacity."

It must be the fervent hope of all well-wishers of the country that the failure of the negotiations should leave no aftermath of bitterness and mutual recrimination. That is also the clearly expressed desire of both the leaders. Yet, in national affairs, fair and frank criticism is not only permissible but essential for progress. Mr Jinnah has often showed a regrettable tendency to avoid commitments on his part and a preference for putting the opponent in the wrong without clarifying his own position. The correspondence furnishes abundant proof of this. Be that as it may, what emerges from Mr Jinnah's latest letters in the series of correspondence is that he demands not what is embodied in the Lahore resolution but something which he calls Pakistan and which should, according to him, include within its boundaries not Muslim regions only but much more and possibly the whole of the Punjab, Bengal and Assam, besides Baluchistan, Sind and the North-West Frontier Province. Further, he claims that this new sovereign State should be formed without ascertaining the wishes of the inhabitants of these areas. The relevant part of the Lahore resolution reads as follows: "Resolved that it is the considered view of this session of the Muslim League that no constitutional plan would be workable in the country or acceptable to the Muslims unless it is designed on the following basic principle, namely, that geographically contiguous units are demarcated into regions which should be so constituted with such territorial adjustments as may be necessary, that the areas in which the Muslims are numerically in a majority as in the north-western and eastern zones of India should be grouped to constitute independent States in which the constituent units shall be autonomous and sovereign." As Prof. Coupland, who cannot be accused of prejudice against the League, remarks in his book, *Indian Politics*: "It is not clear exactly what this paragraph of the resolution meant." But it is clear enough that it did not want areas holding non-Muslim majorities to be made part of the contemplated new State. There are in the Punjab no less than 12 districts and in Bengal no less than 15 districts holding a majority of non-Muslims. In Assam, out of 14 districts only one, Sylhet, has a Muslim majority. Mr Jinnah has referred in his letter dated September 25 to

these six 'provinces' being constituted into Pakistan "subject to territorial adjustments that may be agreed upon." But he would begin at the wrong end, taking entire provinces as they stand and relegate the question of adjustment of boundaries to agreement, without putting it on the firm and reasonable basis of the composition of the population. This is a most unacceptable proposal rendered all the more preposterous by reason of the additional claim that only Muslims are concerned in this question of separation and that no plebiscite is necessary because the Muslim League has made the demand. No wonder Gandhiji declares in his letter dated September 26, "I cannot accept the Lahore resolution as you want me to, especially when you seek to introduce into its interpretation, theories and claims which I cannot accept and which I cannot ever hope to induce India to accept."

Mr Jinnah speaks of his efforts to convert Gandhiji to the Lahore resolution of the Muslim League and his failure in that task. Anyone who reads the Lahore resolution and the C. R. formula as well as Gandhiji's letter of September 24 will agree with Gandhiji's contention that his proposals give Mr Jinnah the substance of the resolution. It is unfortunate that Mr Jinnah could not see this and that he merely reiterated his demand that Gandhiji should accept without any clarification or addition the amorphous Lahore resolution. Any impartial critic will have to admit that Gandhiji has done all that is humanly possible to satisfy the League demand. On no previous occasion has Gandhiji gone so far out as he has done in the present negotiations to satisfy the other party's claims. It was consciousness of this and the gravity of the occasion that led him to suggest that he should have an opportunity to meet the League Council and even an open session of the League itself to press for the acceptance of his proposals.

It is now obvious from the detailed course of the negotiations that Mr Jinnah has come to believe that the claim for separation of the Muslim majority areas put forward in 1940 may not be really for the good of the inhabitants of those regions. As long as it was only the basis of a controversy and a slogan for propaganda, he stuck to the claim. But when the thing itself is offered, he dreads it and is in search of plausible reasons to put it off. His present attitude cannot be explained in any other way. His initial confidence has now been undermined and he is unwilling to submit to the test of an appeal to the people inhabiting the areas. Rightly or wrongly, it seems now that Mr Jinnah has concluded that the Muslim majority areas cannot stand on their own legs and he, therefore, makes the impossible claim that other areas with their predominantly non-Muslim populations should be added thereto. The absurd form to which he has now been compelled to reduce his claim, and his refusal to accept Gandhiji's proposals which

were in effect the substance of the League's demand, prove beyond doubt that the solution for the communal distemper is not in any plan of partition. This may or may not be openly avowed by Mr Jinnah now or at a later late. Mahatma Gandhi may wish to adhere to the blessing he has given to the idea of separation under given conditions should Mr Jinnah persist in his craving for partition, but the issue of the present negotiation clearly points to some form of confederation as the true remedy. If this is sufficiently realized, the talks will not have been held in vain. A confederation of autonomous units with homogeneous populations will provide for the satisfaction in the fullest degree of the natural desire for independent evolution of the component states as well as for the efficient administration of matters of common interest which arise out of the essential economic and cultural unity of India.

GANDHI-VICEROY CORRESPONDENCE

PROPOSALS FOR SETTLEMENT OF DEADLOCK

The following correspondence that passed between Mahatma Gandhi and the Viceroy on Gandhiji's proposals for settlement of the Indian deadlock was released by the Government from New Delhi on August 17, on the eve of the date originally fixed for the Gandhi-Jinnah talks:

GANDHIJI'S LETTER TO VICEROY

PANCHGANI, July 15, 1944.

DEAR FRIEND,

You have no doubt seen the authentic copies now published in the Indian Press of the statements given by me to Mr Gelder of the *News-Chronicle*. As I have said to the Press, they were meant primarily to be shown to you. But Mr Gelder, no doubt, with the best of motives gave the interview premature publicity. I am sorry. The publication will nevertheless be a blessing in disguise, if the interview enables you to grant at least one of my requests contained in my letter of June 17, 1944.

I am,
Yours, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI.

VICEROY'S REPLY

NEW DELHI, July 22, 1944.

DEAR MR GANDHI,

Thank you for your letter of July 15. I have seen the statements you made to Mr Gelder, and your subsequent explanation of them. I do not think I can usefully comment at present except to repeat what I said in my last letter that if you will submit to me a definite and constructive policy, I shall be glad to consider it.

Yours sincerely,
WAVELL.

GANDHIJI'S PROPOSALS TO VICEROY

PANCHGANI, July 27, 1944.

DEAR FRIEND,

I must admit my disappointment over your letter of the 22nd instant. But I am used to work in the face of disappointment. Here is my concrete proposal.

I am prepared to advise the Working Committee to declare that in view of the changed conditions, mass civil disobedience envisaged by the resolution of August 1942, cannot be offered and that full co-operation in the war effort should be given by the Congress, if a declaration of immediate Indian independence is made and a National Government responsible to the Central Assembly be formed subject to the proviso that during the pendency of the war, the military operations should continue as at present, but without involving any financial burden on India. If there is a desire on the part of the British Government for a settlement, friendly talks should take the place of correspondence. But I am in your hands. I shall continue to knock so long as there is the least hope of an honourable settlement.

After the foregoing was written, I saw Lord Munster's speech in the House of Lords. The summary given by him in the House of Lords fairly represents my proposal. This summary may serve as a basis for mutual friendly discussion.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI.

VICEROY'S REPLY TO GANDHIJI

NEW DELHI, August 15, 1944

DEAR MR GANDHI,

Thank you for your letter of July 27. Your proposals are:

1. That you should undertake to advise the Working Committee (a) "that in view of the changed conditions mass civil disobedience envisaged by the resolution of August 1942, cannot be offered" and (b) "that full co-operation in the war effort should be given by the Congress, provided that His Majesty's Government (a) declare immediate Indian independence, and (b) form a "National Government" responsible to the Central Assembly, "subject to the proviso that, during the pendency of the war, the military operations should continue as at present, but without involving any financial burden on India."

2. His Majesty's Government remain most anxious that a settlement of the Indian problem should be reached. But proposals such as those put forward by you are quite unacceptable to His Majesty's Government as a basis for discussion, and you must realize this if you have read Mr Amery's statement in the House of Commons on July 28 last. They are, indeed, very similar to the proposals made by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad to Sir Stafford Cripps in April 1942, and His Majesty's Government's reasons for rejecting them are the same as they were then.

3. Without recapitulating all these reasons in detail I should

remind you that His Majesty's Government at that time made it clear:

(a) That their offer of unqualified freedom after the cessation of hostilities was made conditional upon the framing of a constitution agreed by the main elements of India's national life and the negotiation of the necessary treaty arrangements with His Majesty's Government;

(b) that it is impossible during the period of hostilities to bring about any change in the constitution, by which means alone a "National Government" such as you suggest could be made responsible to the Central Assembly.

The object of these conditions was to ensure the fulfilment of their duty to safeguard the interests of the racial and religious minorities and of the Depressed Classes, and their treaty obligations to the Indian States.

4. It was upon the above conditions that His Majesty's Government invited Indian leaders to take part in an interim government which would operate under the existing constitution. I must make it quite clear that until the war is over, responsibility for defence and military operations cannot be divided from the other responsibilities of Government, and that until hostilities cease and the new constitution is in operation, His Majesty's Government and the Governor-General must retain their responsibility over the entire field. So far as the question of India's share of the cost of the war is concerned, this is essentially a matter for settlement between His Majesty's Government on the one hand and the Government of India on the other, and existing financial arrangements can only be reopened at the instance of one or the other.

5. It is clear, in these circumstances, that no purpose would be served by discussion on the basis which you suggest. If, however, the leaders of the Hindus, the Muslims and important minorities were willing to co-operate in a transitional government established and working within the present constitution, I believe good progress might be made. For such a transitional government to succeed there must, before it is formed, be agreement in principle between Hindus and Muslims and all important elements as to the method by which the new constitution should be framed. This agreement is a matter for Indians themselves. Until Indian leaders have come closer together than they are now I doubt if I myself can do anything to help. Let me remind you too that minority problems are not easy. They are real and can be solved only by mutual compromise and tolerance.

6. The period after the termination of hostilities for which the transitional government would last would depend on the speed with which the new constitution could be framed. I see no reason why preliminary work on that constitution should not begin as soon as the Indian leaders are prepared to co-operate to that end. If they can

arrive at a genuine agreement as to the method of framing the constitution no unnecessary time need be spent after the war in reaching final conclusions and in agreeing on treaty arrangements with His Majesty's Government. There again, the primary responsibility rests on the Indian leaders.

Yours sincerely,
WAVELL.

TABLES

DISTRIBUTION OF MUSLIM POPULATION IN BRITISH INDIA

	Total area In sq. miles	Total population (in lakhs)	Total Muslims	Percentage of Muslims
Madras ..	126 166	49 3.42	3 8.96	7.90
Bombay ..	76 443	20 8 50	1920	9.21
Bengal ..	77 442	60 3.06	33.0 05	54.73
U. P. ..	106 247	55 0.21	8 4.16	15.30
Punjab ..	99 089	28 4.19	16 2.17	57.07
Bihar ..	69 745	36 3.40	4 7.16	12.98
C.P. & Berar	98 575	16 8.14	7.84	4.66
Assam ..	54 951	10.2 05	3 4.42	33.73
N.-W.F.P. ..	14 263	3 0.38	2 7.89	91.79
Sind ..	48 136	4 5.35	3 2.08	70.75
Orissa ..	32 198	8 7.29	1 46	1.68
Ajmer-Merwara	2,400	5.84	.90	15.40
Andaman and Nicobars ..	3,143	.34	.08	23.70
Baluchistan	54,456	5.02	4.39	87.50
Coorg ..	1,593	1.69	.14	8.73
Delhi ..	574	9.18	3.05	33.22
BRITISH INDIA	865,4 21	295 8.06	79 3.95	26.84

DISTRIBUTION OF MUSLIM POPULATION IN INDIAN STATES AND AGENCIES

	Total population in lakhs	Muslim population	Percentage of Muslims to total population
1. Assam States ..			3.3
2. Baluchistan States ..			97.5
3. Baroda			7.2
4. Bengal States			32.1
5. Bihar & Orissa States ..			4.1
6. Bombay			9.0
7. Central India Agency ..			4.6
8. Central Provinces States			9.4
9. Gwalior			5.9
10. Hyderabad			10.4

11. Kashmir (including Jammu)			77.7
12. Madras States Agency: ..			6.0
Cochin ..			6.8
Travancore ..			6.0
Other Madras States ..			4.5
13. Mysore			6.1
14. N.-W.F. Agencies ..			50.0
15. Punjab States ..			9.1
16. Punjab States Agency ..			35.2
17. Rajputana Agency ..			9.7
18. Sikkim			0.1
19. United Provinces States			25.1
20. Western India States Agency			13.0
TOTAL ..	79,0.98	10,6.57	12.7

DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION IN PAKISTAN AREAS

NORTH-WEST FRONTIER

Proportion of Muslim Population by Districts

Districts	Total population (1941) in lakhs	Percentage of Muslims to total population
Hazara	7.96	94.94
Mardan	5.07	95.50
Peshawar	8.52	90.34
Kohat	2.89	92.00
Bannu	2.96	87.06
Dera Ismail Khan ..	2.98	85.78
TOTAL	30.38	91.79

BALUCHISTAN

Br. Baluchistan ..	5.02	87.50

SIND

Districts	Total population in lakhs	Percentage of Muslim population to total population
Hyderabad	7.59	66.9
Karachi	7.14	64.0
Larkana	5.11	81.8
Nawabshah	5.84	74.7
Sukkur ..	6.93	70.9

Thar Parkar ..	..	5.81	50.2
Upper Sind Frontier	..	3.04	90.4
TOTAL ..	..	41.46	70.7

PUNJAB

Districts		Total population in lakhs	Hindus	Muslims	Sikhs
Hissar	..	10.06	64.85	28.33	6.03
Rohtak	..	9.56	81.60	17.22	.15
Gurgaon	..	8.51	77.42	32.49	.7
Karnal	..	9.94	66.93	30.58	2.00
Ambala	..	8.47	48.41	31.64	18.44
Simla	..	.38	76.38	4.73	2.67
Jullundur	..	11.27	17.57	45.17	26.44
Ludhiana	..	8.18	20.36	36.92	41.69
Ferozepur	..	14.23	19.62	45.08	33.68
Kangra	..	8.99	93.23	5.09	.57
Hoshiarpur	..	11.7	40.00	36.64	16.92
Lahore	..	16.95	16.81	60.69	18.29
Amritsar	..	14.13	15.35	46.50	36.14
Gurdaspur	..	11.53	24.55	50.23	19.18
Sialkot	..	11.90	19.41	62.10	11.70
Gujranwala	..	9.12	11.84	70.39	10.87
Shaikhupura	..	8.52	9.11	63.62	18.85
Gujrat	..	11.04	7.61	85.60	6.35
Jhelum	..	6.29	6.48	89.51	3.12
Rawalpindi	..	7.85	10.50	80.00	8.16
Attock	..	6.75	6.39	90.52	2.97
Shahpur	..	9.98	10.02	83.87	4.81
Mianwali	..	5.03	12.23	86.17	1.37
Montgomery	..	13.29	14.36	69.07	13.91
Lyallpur	..	13.96	11.61	62.82	18.81
Jhang	..	8.21	15.71	82.58	1.49
Multan	..	14.84	16.31	77.98	4.15
Muzzaffargarh	..	7.12	12.69	86.52	.83
Dera Ghazi Khan	..	5.81	10.86	88.90	.17
Baloch Trans-Frontier Tract	..	.40	.8	99.2	..
TOTAL	..	2 84	28	57	13

BENGAL

District	Total population in lakhs	Percentage of total population Hindus	Muslims
Burdwan	18.9	81.44	18.56
Birbhum	10.5	73.31	26.69
Bankura	12.9	95.41	4.59
Midnapore	31.2	92.41	7.59
Hooghly	13.8	83.83	16.17
Howrah	14.5	78.73	21.27
24-Parganas	35.3	66.35	33.65
Calcutta	21.1	74.00	26.00
Nadia	17.6	38.33	61.67
Murshidabad	16.4	44.44	55.56
Jessore	18.3	38.84	61.16
Khulna	19.4	51.50	49.50
Rajshahi	15.7	24.21	75.79
Dinajpur	19.3	49.43	50.57
Jalpaiguri	10.9	76.01	23.99
Darjeeling	3.8	97.37	2.63
Rangpur	28.8	29.21	70.79
Bogra	12.6	16.64	83.36
Pabna	17.1	23.10	76.90
Malda	12.3	45.72	54.28
Dacca	42.2	33.19	66.81
Mymensingh	60.2	23.44	76.56
Faridpur	28.9	36.20	63.80
Bakargunj	35.5	29.37	71.63
Tippera	38.6	24.22	75.78
Noakhali	22.2	21.54	78.46
Chittagong	21.5	26.20	73.80
Chittagong Hill Tracts	2.5	96.5	3.5
TOTAL	60 3	45.27	54.73

ASSAM

Districts	Total population in lakhs	Percentage of total population Hindus (including tribes)	Muslims
Cachar	6.5	61.49	38.51
Sylhet	31.2	39.29	60.71
Khasi and Jainta Hills	1.2	98.69	1.31
Naga Hills	1.9	99.72	.28
Lushai Hills	1.5	99.93	.07
Goalpara	10.0	53.77	46.23

Kamrup	12.0	71.00	29.00
Danang	7.4	83.58	16.42
Nowgong	7.1	64.81	35.19
Sibsagar	10.7	95.18	4.82
Lakhimpur	8.9	95.02	4.98
Garo Hills	2.2	95.35	4.65
Sadya Frontier Tract	.6	98.56	1.44
Balipara Frontier Tract .	.06	99.06	.94
TOTAL ..	10.2	55.27	54.73

TABLE GIVING POPULATION OF MUSLIMS AND NON-MUSLIMS IN PAKISTAN AREA ACCORDING TO RAJAJI FORMULA

N.-W. PAKISTAN

Area	Total population in lakhs.	Muslims	Hindus	Sikhs
Punjab—17 North-Western districts ..	169	124	28	17
Sind	45	32	13	..
N.-W.F.P.	30	28	2	..
Baluchistan ..	6	5	1	..
PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL POPULATION		76	17	7
TOTAL ..	250	189	44	17

N.-E PAKISTAN

Area	Total population in lakhs.	Muslims	Hindus	Sikhs
Bengal—16 districts ..	401	287	114	..
Assam—Sylhet ..	31	19	12	..
PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL POPULATION		71	29	..
TOTAL ..	432	306	126	..

TOTAL PAKISTAN

Area	Total population in lakhs.	Muslims	Hindus	Sikhs
N.-W. Pakistan ..	250	189	44	..
N.-E. Pakistan ..	432	306	126	..
PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL POPULATION		73	24	..
TOTAL	682	495	170	..

INDIA
Area with boundaries roughly along Districts in which Muslims constitute a majority according to the 1941 census.
KASHMIR
N.W.F.P.
PUNJAB
BALUCHISTAN
SIND
RAJPUTANA
UNITED PROVINCES
NEPAL
BHUTAN
ASSAM
BIHAR
BENGAL
BURMA
CENTRAL INDIA
CENTRAL PROVINCES
ORISSA
BOMBAY
HYDERABAD
MADRAS
MYSORE
TRAVANCORE
ARABIAN SEA
BAY OF BENGAL